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ARCHBISHOP JOHN CARROLL

THE  
LIFE AND TIMES  
OF  
JOHN CARROLL

Archbishop of Baltimore  
(1735-1815)

BY

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DEDICATED  
TO  
HIS EMINENCE  
DENNIS CARDINAL DOUGHERTY  
ARCHBISHOP OF PHILADELPHIA



## PREFACE

John Carroll, the first bishop of the Catholic Church in the United States, was born in Maryland, on January 25, 1735. As a boy of thirteen, after completing his elementary studies at Bohemia Manor Academy, he was sent abroad with his cousin, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, to the English Jesuit College at St. Omer, France. He entered the English Province of the Society of Jesus in 1753, and was ordained to the priesthood in 1769. The year after the Suppression of the Society, he returned to Maryland. In 1776, he accompanied Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Chase and Charles Carroll of Carrollton, in their unsuccessful mission to Canada. Appointed Prefect-Apostolic of the Church in the Thirteen Original States in 1784, he guided the Catholic body, cleric and lay, through the difficult period of reconstruction which followed the Revolutionary War. In 1789, he was elected by his fellow-priests first Bishop of Baltimore, the oldest episcopal see in the nation. For twenty-five years he was the chief shepherd of the Catholic flock in the United States. In 1808, the See of Baltimore was raised to the dignity of an archbishopric and four suffragan dioceses were created—at Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Bardstown. In the consecration of his suffragans, he witnessed the crowning act of his quarter-century of church organization. He died in Baltimore, December 3, 1815, on the threshold of his eighty-first year.

Almost a half-century has passed since the well-beloved historian of the Church in the United States, John Gilmary Shea, began the composition of his *Life and Times of the Most Reverend John Carroll*. Since that time numerous documents on the subject have been brought to light; some of these have been published in various historical periodicals; while many other documents, lying for a century in the quiet of libraries and archives here and abroad, have added considerably to our knowledge of the problems which John Carroll faced during the twenty-five years of his episcopate. The archival depots of Rome, Paris,

Westminster, London, Stonyhurst, Liège, and Brussels, were searched for documentary material, and the episcopal archives of Baltimore, Detroit, Quebec, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and old Vincennes were also examined for further information. I have not hesitated to repeat paragraphs from these unpublished sources wherever the clarity or the continuity of the text required it.

These two volumes are the result of my lectures on American Church history at the Catholic University of America during the academic years 1919-1921, and I am happy to chronicle here the coöperation of my students in analyzing and criticising the many photostat documents which have been used for this work. The Catholic University of America has been a centre of study for American history since its foundation, and it is fitting in this regard to offer a tribute of recognition to the present Rector, the Right Reverend Bishop Shahan, for his inspiration in the planning of this work and for his constant encouragement.

My thanks are extended also to the curators of different libraries and archives for substantial assistance. To Canon Edwin Burton, D.D., for valuable direction, and to Father John Hungerford Pollen, S.J., for copies of the Carroll correspondence now in the London Jesuit archives, I am particularly grateful. To a group of personal friends who assisted me financially in having documents photographed and copied for this work, I offer sincere acknowledgement.

To my Ordinary, the Cardinal-Archbishop of Philadelphia, I wish to express my grateful appreciation of the honour he has given me in permitting me to dedicate these volumes to him.

PETER GUILDAY.

*March 25, 1922.*

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# THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JOHN CARROLL

*Archbishop of Baltimore*

## CHAPTER I

### BIRTH AND EARLY EDUCATION

(1735-1748)

The genealogy of the Carrolls of Maryland is somewhat uncertain. The popularity of the Christian names Charles, Daniel, Mary, Eleanor, in the different branches of the family and the complicated kinship which arose from marriage ties render it difficult to discover their exact lineage.<sup>1</sup> The *Stemmata Carrollana*, however, gives a basis for such a genealogy; and for all branches of the family in Maryland, a common ancestor is claimed in Florence O'Carroll, King of Ely, Ireland, who died in 1205.<sup>2</sup> The leading Maryland Carrolls were of the Catholic Faith, and the old family motto, *In fide et in bello fortes*, though changed in 1688 by Charles Carroll, the Attorney General, to *Ubicumque cum libertate*, may be accepted as the keynote to the Carroll character.

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<sup>1</sup> The genealogical synopsis in ROWLAND, *Life and Correspondence of Charles Carroll of Carrollton*, vol. ii, pp. 433-448 (New York, 1908), is based upon the *Stemmata Carrollana*, by FREDERICK JOHN O'CARROLL, in the *Journal of the Royal Historical and Archeological Association of Ireland* (October, 1883), vol. vi, 4th series. Cf. DOWNING, *The American Capitoline Hill and Its Early Catholic Proprietors*, in the *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. ii, p. 273. Downing writes: "It may be remarked in passing that the genealogical and biographical publications issued by the Carrolls present a confusing mass of errors which has misled the most conscientious historians" (*Ibid.*, p. 279). Downing prints in this article a letter from Elizabeth Carroll, the sister of the archbishop, dated Washington, D. C., March 16, 1810 (from the Notre Dame Archives), which contains the most authentic family history of the Carroll family.

<sup>2</sup> "It is indisputable that the O'Carrolls were in very early ages kings of the entire district of Ely, and the territory was so named from Ely, daughter of Luchta, son of the King of Munster, one of our ancient lawgivers who flourished about the time of our Lord Jesus Christ" (BETHAM, *Irish Antiquarian Researches*, cited by RUSSELL, *Maryland, the Land of Sanctuary*, pp. 586-587. Balto., 1907).

The Catholic Faith had witnessed a century of life, if not of progress, in the English colonies of North America, when John Carroll, the first bishop of the new Republic, was born to Daniel and Eleanor Carroll, on January 8, 1735, at Upper Marlboro, Prince George's County, Maryland.<sup>3</sup> Daniel Carroll was of the family of Keane Carroll, of Ireland, and had emigrated to America at the beginning of the eighteenth century. He became a prominent Maryland merchant, and he must have possessed more than the attraction of wealth to have won for his bride one of Maryland's richest heiresses, Eleanor Darnall, the daughter of Henry Darnall of the Woodyard.<sup>4</sup> John Carroll's mother was among the highly educated women of her day; and, like so many of the young Catholic girls of the colonies, she had been sent to Europe to finish her schooling. Ties of blood and ties of marriage linked the leading Catholic households of Maryland into one large family—the Roziers, the Youngs, the Darnalls, the Brents, the Sewalls, the Brookes, and the Carrolls of the two principal branches.

These two branches of the Carroll family, much inter-married, are descended from Charles Carroll, the Attorney General, and Daniel Carroll, of Upper Marlboro.

The principal descendants of Charles Carroll the Attorney General, who arrived in Maryland in 1688, are: (1) CHARLES CARROLL OF CARROLLTON (1737-1832), who was son of Charles Carroll of Annapolis and grandson of the Attorney General. His father was one of the wealthiest land-owners of the colonies. He himself was the only Catholic signer of the Declaration of Independence,<sup>5</sup> and by marriage he was a cousin of Archbishop Carroll. (2) ELEANOR CARROLL, the daughter

<sup>3</sup> SHEA (*History of the Catholic Church in the United States*, vol. ii, p. 27) says: "The house where the patriarch of the Catholic Church in this country first saw the light is still standing, but a grove of murmuring pines covers the site of Boone chapel, where he was probably baptized, and in childhood went with his parents to kneel before the Altar of God." This house was given up during John Carroll's absence in Europe. An unsuccessful attempt was made in 1884 to arouse Catholic sentiment towards preserving the birthplace of Archbishop Carroll. (*Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9A-B4.) After his father's death (1750), Mrs. Carroll went to live in a house belonging to the family in the Rock Creek district, near the present Forest Glen, Md. This second home was destroyed by fire, and all that remains is the hearthstone now in the Catholic rectory at Forest Glen.

<sup>4</sup> For the Darnall genealogy, cf. ROWLAND, *Life and Correspondence of Charles Carroll of Carrollton*, vol. ii, p. 445ss.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Researches*, vol. xxiv, p. 272.

of Daniel Carroll, niece of Charles Carroll of Annapolis, and grand-daughter of the Attorney General, who married Daniel Carroll of Rock Creek, the brother of Archbishop Carroll.

(3) DANIEL CARROLL OF DUDDINGTON, the great-grandson of the Attorney General, who married Anne Brent, niece of Archbishop Carroll. He was one of the proprietors of the land on which the national Capitol stands.<sup>6</sup>

The principal descendants of Daniel Carroll of Upper Marlboro, were: (1) DANIEL CARROLL OF ROCK CREEK, the Commissioner, and brother of Archbishop Carroll; (2) ANNE CARROLL, the wife of Robert Brent, who was the mother of Robert Brent, the first Mayor of Washington, D. C.; and (3) JOHN CARROLL, first Bishop of the Catholic Church in the United States.

John Carroll was the fourth of seven children. The eldest, Henry Carroll, was drowned in boyhood. Daniel, the second son, usually called Daniel Carroll the Commissioner, married Eleanor Carroll, the cousin of Charles Carroll of Carrollton. Two of the future Archbishop's sisters married into the Brent and Young families, and the youngest, Elizabeth, died single.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> DOWNING, *The American Capitoline Hill, etc.*, p. 279.

<sup>7</sup> In a letter from Daniel Carroll, John's brother, to James Carroll, a kinsman in Ireland, dated 1762, we learn that Daniel Carroll, the nephew of Father Carroll, was the heir presumptive to the great Carroll fortune in case Charles Carroll of Carrollton should not marry:—"Upper Marlboro", Maryland, Dec. 20th, 1762. "As you express a particular desire of having a particular account of your relations in this part of the world, the following may be agreeable to you. My father died in the year 1750, and left six children—myself, Ann, John, Eleanor, Mary and Betty. He left me land amounting in value between 4 and 5,000 £. Some time after, I married a lady of our name, Elizabeth Carroll, to whom I was contracted before my father's death. Her fortune was three thousand pounds in money. I had been returned two years from Flanders where my father had sent me for my education, and had been there for six years. I have a son named Daniel about 10 years old, and a daughter named Mary about 8 years old. The lady I married is a daughter of Daniel Carroll, son of Charles Carroll, Esq., Litterluna, who came from Ireland and settled in this country. His abilities and prudent conduct procured him some of the best offices under this Government, for then Roman Catholics were entitled to hold office in this province. By this means his knowledge of the Law, and by taking up large tracts of land which have since increased in value some hundred per cent., he made a very large fortune. Two of his sons only survived out of a great many children—Charles and Daniel—the latter, my wife's father, who died in the year 1734, and left three children—Charles, Elizabeth (my wife), and Mary—Charles inherits about £600 per annum—will not probably marry, and Mary is married to one Mr. Ignatius Digges. Charles Carroll, Esq., eldest brother to my wife's father, is living, and is worth about £100,000, the second richest man in our province; he has one son named Charles, who had a very liberal education and is now finishing his studies in London. In case of his death that estate is left to my son Daniel by Charles Carroll, Esq. My eldest

No positive evidence exists to warrant an immediate ancestor to the heads of these two branches of the Carroll family. Some genealogists make Daniel Carroll, of Litterluna, the father of Charles Carroll, the Attorney General, and of Keane Carroll of Ireland. One fact, however, has the appearance of certainty: the lack of cordiality between the chief representatives of the two families. The two grandsons, Charles and John, probably met at Bohemia Manor Academy, and later journeyed together to St. Omer's, where they were fellow-collegians; but they seem never to have become close friends. They separated as young men, the one to enter the priesthood and the other to take up the study of law; they met later (1776) as representatives in Canada of the Continental Congress, but after that they drifted apart again, the one to rise high in the affairs of the Church and the other to live for many years within the halo of the Declaration of Independence as America's First Citizen. Social distinction and wealth were common to both, intermarriage had brought them into closer intimacy, and both possessed the blood of the Calverts through Henry Darnall, of Portland Manor. It would be difficult to say what it was that kept the two families apart; but there is ground for the suspicion that the cause of the coldness was the lack of religious piety on the part of the older branch of the family, that to which Charles Carroll of Carrollton belonged.

We find but seldom in the correspondence between Charles Carroll of Annapolis and his famous son any of those deeper appeals to religious fervour which one would expect from a Catholic father to his son, a student in a Catholic college, three thousand miles away.<sup>8</sup> Charles Carroll of Carrollton admitted in later years that he had yielded to the seductive teaching of the time during his student days in Paris and London, and that

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sister Ann is well married to one Mr. Robert Brent in Virginia, a province to the southward of this, divided by the river Potomac; he lives about 60 miles from us. They have one child named George. My brother John was sent abroad for his education on my return, and is now a Jesuit at Liège, teaching philosophy and eminent in his profession. Eleanor, my second sister, is married likewise very well to one Mr. William Brent in Virginia, near my eldest sister. She has three boys and one girl. My sisters, Mary and Betsey, are unmarried, and live chiefly with my mother, who is very well. This account of your friends I hope will be satisfactory to you" (*Researches*, vol. xii, p. 53).

<sup>8</sup> Cf. The Carroll correspondence in the *Maryland Historical Magazine*, vols. x, xi, xii.



he had imbibed to a certain extent the doctrines of Voltaire. The circles in which he moved were not only sceptical but were also influenced by the Cisalpine movement then struggling for dominance in English Catholic life. During the manhood of the two men—first Catholic bishop and First Citizen—the same lack of piety is visible in Carrollton's life, but the negligence, if there actually were such, was of a temporary character, for in one of Archbishop Carroll's last letters, the prelate insists (March 31, 1815) that Annapolis be regularly visited by a priest, "especially since Mr. Carroll Senr. [Charles Carroll of Carrollton] has resumed all the pious practices of religion [and] frequentation of the Sacraments."<sup>9</sup>

The chief problem in the Catholic homes of colonial Maryland, as in all Catholic homes within the British dominions during the post-Reformation period, was the Catholic education of the children. As the cleavage with the Catholic past widened in England, the education of Catholic boys and girls became more and more difficult, and an outlaw race of schools, colleges and seminaries was begun "beyond the seas." The schools in the English colonies were regulated by the same penal code as prevailed in England, and Catholic children could enter only

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<sup>9</sup> HUGHES, *History of the Society of Jesus in North America*, vol. II, p. 857 (New York, 1910). In a letter to his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Harriet Chew Carroll (August 29, 1810), the venerable patriot gives a comforting proof of this renewal of his early fervour: "I am much gratified by yr assurances that yr daughters shall be brought up in the R. C. religion; it is my wish and their father's also that they should be; unfortunately tho' at present he has little religion himself, he is quite in earnest that his daughters should be religious; he and many others under the influence of passions know and feel the importance of religion tho' they do not live up to its precepts. Being persuaded that there can be but one true religion taught by Christ and that the R. C. is that religion, I conceive it to be my duty to have my grandchildren brought up in it. I feel no ill will or illiberal prejudices agt. the sectarians which have abandoned that faith; if their lives be conformable to the duties and morals prescribed by the gospel I have the charity to hope and believe that they will be rewarded with eternal happiness tho' they may entertain erroneous doctrines in point of faith; the great number in every religion not having the leisure or means to investigate the truth of the doctrines they have been taught must rest their religious faith on their instructors, and, therefore, the great body of the people may conscientiously believe that they hold the true faith; but they who from illiberal education, from understanding, from books, not written by one party only and from leisure have the means of examining into the truth of the doctrines they have been taught as orthodox are in my opinion bound to make the examination nor suffer early instructions and impressions or habits or prejudices to operate against the conviction of what is right. Upon conviction only a change of religion is justifiable; on a concern so seriously interesting to all of us no worldly motives should sway our conduct" (Cf. *Researches*, vol. xvii, p. 148). The marriage of Harriet Chew and Charles

at the price of their faith.<sup>10</sup> It was against the law to employ a Catholic tutor, though, as the years went by, this law fell into abeyance, especially towards the end of the eighteenth century. It was equally unlawful, in fact, treasonable, for Catholics to send their children to the English Catholic colleges on the Continent; but as is well known, Catholic parents felt no hesitation in allowing their boys and girls, despite their tender years, to run the risk of capture, in order that they might receive a Catholic education. In structure, the anti-Catholic laws of the Colonies in educational matters were practically identical with those of the mother country. It was only the fewness of the Catholics outside Pennsylvania and Maryland that can explain the absence of court trials on this question. In Maryland, Catholic schools, with the exception of Bohemia Academy, were of an elementary character and had existed from the foundation of the province. Father Thomas Hughes, S.J., writes:

In the history of the old Colonies, and indeed of the new States also, we do not think a parallel can be found to the liberality with which Maryland Catholics provided an expensive education for their children, simply because they wished that education to be Catholic. Nor was there any time, during more than a century previous to the American Revolution, when good parents were not sending their children to the continental colleges and convents of Europe. It was chiefly the boys, however, that they trusted to the perils of the long voyage and journey by land and sea, from the banks of the Potomac to St. Omer's College, in French Flanders. As far back as the Orange Revolution, St. Omer's was a beam in the eye and a thorn in the side of sensitive and scrupulous rebels like Jack Coode. But it was after the middle of the eighteenth century that

Carroll of Doughoregan was performed by Bishop Carroll, at Philadelphia, in 1800. It was one of the few occasions when the leading members of the two families met.

<sup>10</sup> MEYER, *England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth*, pp. 92-121 (London, 1916); GUILDAY, *English Catholic Refugees in the Low Countries (1558-1795)*, (London, 1914), where a bibliography on this subject is to be found (pp. 24-54). A catalogue of these laws will be found in MORRIS, *Condition of the Catholics under James I*, pp. 315-331 (London, 1872), and in CHARLES BUTLER, *Historical Memoirs of the English, Irish and Scottish Catholics Since the Reformation*, vol. ii, pp. 230-247, 384-391, vol. iii, 148-149 (London, 1822). As an example of these penal laws on education, the Act of 1700 "for the preventing of the growth of Popery" may be cited: ". . . Whoever shall be convicted of sending any child or other person beyond the seas, out of the King's obedience to the intent that such child or person shall be educated in the Roman religion, shall forfeit £100 for the sole use and benefit of him who shall discover any person so offending to the end that Protestant children may not in the life time of their parents for want of fitting maintenance . . . be necessitated in compliance with their parents to embrace the Popish religion contrary to their inclination; Be it enacted that if such a parent in order to compelling such his child to change his or her religion, shall refuse to allow such child a fitting

the practice became quite a system, entailing an amount of administration.<sup>11</sup>

To prepare for the schools in Europe, elementary training was necessary. And there was much to militate against the presence of elementary schools in the province. There was scarcely any period after 1650 when the Maryland Catholics felt safe from the obnoxious and irritating penal code, and the schools that were started, were started in secret and continued in secret. Moreover, the social and economic conditions of colonial Maryland made it almost impracticable for Catholics and for non-Catholics to found educational institutions. Towns were a rarity in the midst of what might be called a cluster of baronial manors, as the extensive plantations actually were; and since education was viewed by the large landowners more from its social than its intellectual aspect, they were content to send their sons and daughters abroad, as much for the social life they would find there as for their schooling. So far as the government in the Province was concerned, only one serious attempt to erect a college was made. This was in 1671, and the failure of the plan seems to have chilled all enthusiasm. It was not until 1782, when Washington College, at Chestertown on the Eastern Shore, was chartered, that advanced educational life really began in Maryland. Father John Lewis, the Superior of the American clergy, was among the contributors to its foundation. "The instruction of youth was a private matter, left to the individual parent to accomplish as best he could according to his means and the opportunities which might occur. Sometimes the children were sent to England; sometimes there were private tutors, some of whom were owned as servants; parents taught the children, etc. In fact, it is difficult to conceive how the elements of an English education could have been brought to a

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maintenance suitable to the degree and ability of such parent . . . then complaint shall be made to the Lord High Chancellor or to the Keeper of the Great Seal, and it shall be lawful to the said Lord High Chancellor or the Keeper of the Great Seal to make such an order as shall be agreeable to this Act" (*Statutes of the Realm*, William and Mary, London, 1820). Cf. *Papery in Maryland*, in the *Researches* (vol. xxv, pp. 258-274), a collection of excerpts from the British Museum Additional MSS.

<sup>11</sup> *Educational Convoys to Europe in the Olden Time*, in the *American Ecclesiastical Review*, vol. xxix (1903), p. 24.

community so widely scattered in any more regular manner."<sup>12</sup> A few elementary schools were begun, but the scarcity of teachers and, it must be admitted, the indifference of those selected to oversee them, practically nullified all efforts at a systematic plan of elementary education. "God only knows," said the Rev. Thomas Bacon, rector of St. Peter's parish, Talbot County, in a sermon printed in 1751, "the great necessity of such a work in this province, where education is hardly to be attained at any rate by the children of the poor, much greater than can be apprehended, from the general complaint, or even discovered by the particular inquiry of such as are put upon it by the duties of their station. Many poor white children have I found (I speak from sad experience), and many more undoubtedly there are, as ignorant as the children of the poor benighted negroes."<sup>13</sup>

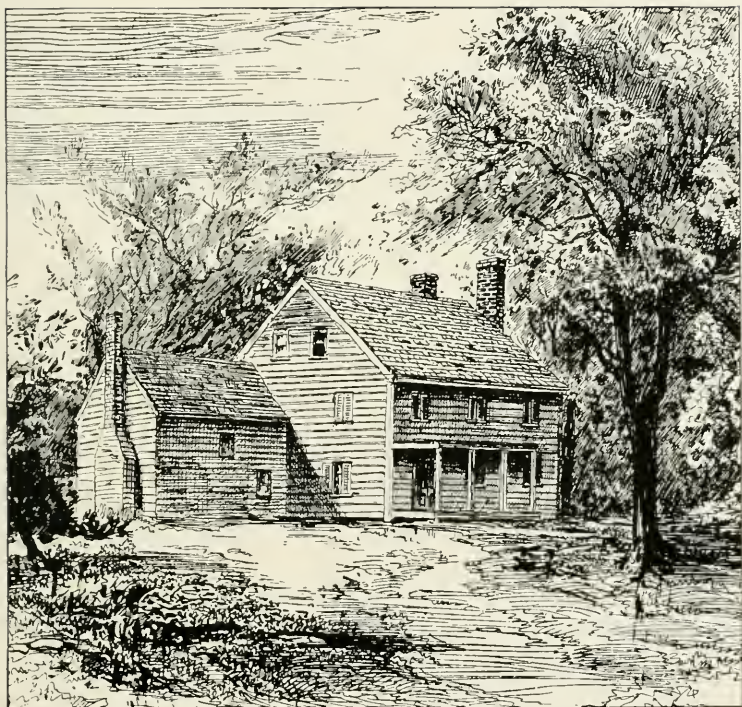
It is indeed a deplorable page in the history of colonial education—the common neglect of the poor and of the middle classes in the education of their children. To offset this unpleasant picture, there is another: it is the unwritten chapter of Catholic elementary education in Maryland and Pennsylvania all through the dark ages of anti-Catholic penal legislation. Scanty as are the records extant to-day even in such profuse collections as Hughes' *History of the Society of Jesus in North America*, one cannot go astray in asserting the claim that from the first arrival of the colonists on March 25, 1634, the Fathers of the Society of Jesus were persistently engaged in the establishment of a Catholic school system.<sup>14</sup> Father Andrew White, S. J., who accompanied the Calvert expedition to Maryland, was one of the foremost English scholars of Europe. He had taught in the English colleges at Valladolid and Seville, and there is no doubt that in true Jesuit fashion, his work as the shepherd of the little flock soon divided itself into two parts—the care of the souls under his charge and the training of the children. "It is certain," writes Dr. Burns, the historian of Catholic education in the United States, "that the matter of educational provision for

<sup>12</sup> B. C. STEINER, *History of Education in Maryland*, p. 4. Washington, D. C., 1894. Cf. NEILL, *Terra Maria*, p. 199. Philadelphia, 1867; BROWN, *Maryland, the History of the Palatinate*, pp. 157-159. New York, 1904; THOMAS, *Chronicles of Colonial Maryland*, p. 109. Cumberland, Md., 1913.

<sup>13</sup> Cited by STEINER, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-35.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, Text, vol. ii, pp. 46, 135-138, 147.





CARROLL'S BIRTHPLACE—UPPER MARLBORO



the children of the colonists occupied the attention of the Jesuits from the very beginning. As early as 1640, when only four settlements had been formed, the question of establishing a college was discussed by members of the Order in Maryland and their higher superiors."<sup>15</sup> This college was no doubt projected for St. Mary's City. Father Hughes, who gives us the sources for the project, says: "We merely observe here that this plan would have given us a St. Mary's College, Maryland, within very few years after Quebec College, New France, and within still fewer years after Harvard College, Massachusetts (1637)."<sup>16</sup> This college project was thwarted by Lord Baltimore's opposition to the Society during the quarrel with the Jesuits in England. Meantime, the work of education was carried on by private teachers. The best known of these was Brother Ralph Crouch, who came to Maryland in 1639, and who for the next twenty years conducted a private school at Newtown, then the centre of Jesuit missionary activity. Crouch was "the right hand and solace" of the Fathers.<sup>17</sup> He was born in Oxford and entered the Society as a temporal coadjutor or lay brother in 1620. In 1639, he left the novitiate at Watten and went to Maryland. Re-admitted into the Society in 1659, he sailed for Europe, and was professed as a lay brother in 1669. He died on November 18, 1679.

Catholic interest in elementary education is evidenced by no less than forty-two legacies for school purposes left between 1650 and 1685. One of these bequests is that of Edward Cotton, who died in 1650, consisting of an estate of 450 acres and many heads of cattle. Steiner seems not to have known of the existence of this will, for he speaks of Augustine Herman's legacy of 1684, leaving Bohemia Manor for school purposes, as the first educational bequest in Maryland.<sup>18</sup> The Catholic school opened in New York City under Governor Dongan's patronage in 1684, and the Newtown School, begun by Ralph Crouch, were both

<sup>15</sup> *The Catholic School System in the United States: Its Principles, Origin, and Establishment*, p. 90. New York, 1908.

<sup>16</sup> HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Text, vol. i, p. 346.

<sup>17</sup> STEINER, *op. cit.*, p. 16; FOLEY, *Records S. J.*, vol. v, p. 953. Cf. *Some Early Catholic Grammar Schools*, by TREACY, in the *United States Catholic Historical Magazine*, vol. i, pp. 71-73.

<sup>18</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 18. For a list of Catholic wills, and for the text of Edward Cotton's bequest, cf. BURNS, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-101.

suppressed during the anti-Catholic days of the Orange Rebellion. Crouch had been succeeded by another lay brother, Gregory Turberville, who directed the Newtown School until his death in 1684. The *Annual Letters* of 1681 state that in 1677 a college for humanities "was opened by our Society in the centre of the country."<sup>19</sup> This no doubt refers to an extension of the school at Newtown. There is no evidence that a full college course was ever attained at the Newtown School, and the fact that as early as 1677, two of the Newtown scholars, Robert Brooke and Thomas Gardner, were sent to St. Omer's would argue for an incomplete course in humanities in the Maryland school.

The new era of persecution aroused by the Orange Rebellion of 1688 not only closed the school at Newtown, but was the cause of the law passed by the Maryland Assembly in 1704, "for the further prevention of the growth of Popery," making it illegal for Catholics to carry on school work.<sup>20</sup> The burden thereof was thus thrown back upon the Catholic parents. Here again the iniquitous law interposed, rendering a Catholic father or guardian amenable to a fine of forty shillings a day if he employed any but a Protestant tutor in his home.

If he sought to procure a Catholic education for his son by sending him across the sea to St. Omer's, or some other of the Jesuit colleges in Europe founded for this very purpose, he became liable to a fine of £100. Poor Catholics were thus effectually deprived of all opportunity to give their children a Catholic education, except in so far as they were able to instruct them themselves. Wealthy Catholics fared somewhat better, as it was easier for them to secure a private tutor, and it was less difficult for them to conceal the fact. They could afford, too, to send their sons to Europe to study, and, in spite of the stringency of the laws and the vigilance of authorities, they often found means to do so without being discovered. One great help to this end was afforded by the use of an *alias*, the student assuming a new name by which he was known during the time of his journey to Europe and his stay there.<sup>21</sup>

When Benedict, Lord Baltimore, apostatized in 1715, the government of Maryland was restored to him by the English

<sup>19</sup> FOLEY, *Records S. J.*, vol. iii, p. 394.

<sup>20</sup> SHEA, *History of the Catholic Church in the United States*, vol. i, p. 358. Cf. *A Dark Chapter in the History of Maryland*, by E. I. DEVITT, S. J., in the *United States Catholic Historical Magazine*, vol. i (1887), p. 155. Cf. *Ibid.*, vol. vii, p. 532.

<sup>21</sup> BURNS, *op. cit.*, p. 107. A partial list of these *aliases* will be found in FOLEY, *Records S. J.*, *Collectanea*, vol. vii, part ii.

crown. Benedict's son, who succeeded to his father's proprietary rights that same year, encouraged the enactment of laws which disqualified Catholic Marylanders from representation in the Assembly. From 1715 down to 1751 Catholics were unmolested in the practice of their religion, providing their religious services were held according to the law passed in the reign of Queen Anne which allowed Catholic priests in Maryland to officiate in private families. It was during this period that Catholic education in the colony was again organized, and it is to this period that Bohemia Manor Academy belongs. In 1751, an attempt was made to introduce the penal code in all its rigour in the colony, and various acts were introduced in the Assembly to that end. Few of these passed the Upper House, though in 1756 an act was passed doubling the taxes paid by the Catholics. "From what I have said," wrote Charles Carroll, Senior, to his son (July 14, 1760), "I leave you to judge whether Maryland be a tolerable residence for a Roman Catholic. Were I younger, I would certainly quit it."<sup>22</sup> From this iniquitous tax there was no escape. Every colonist, including the slaves over sixteen years of age, was compelled to contribute annually to the support of the established Anglican Church, even though its ministrations were rejected by the majority. "The saying used to be current, and it is partly true, that the older Episcopal churches of the lower counties were built by the contributions of Catholics."<sup>23</sup> And this, it must be remembered, was the situation at a time when clerical profligacy was undermining the faith of those who held the Anglican creed, when the immorality and inebriety of some of the established clergy "had become so glaring that the legislature thought it necessary to devise some mode of coercing them into decency of behaviour."<sup>24</sup>

Such were the conditions which prevailed in Maryland during the boyhood of John Carroll. The temper of the times was bitterly anti-Catholic, and the laws which were always liable to extreme interpretation by bigoted judges, were so framed that

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Researches*, vol. xxv, p. 276.

<sup>23</sup> REV. EDWARD I. DEVITT, S. J., *A Dark Chapter in the Catholic History of Maryland*, in the *United States Catholic Historical Magazine*, vol. i, p. 132.

<sup>24</sup> HAWKS, *Rise and Progress of the P. E. Church in Maryland*, pp. 128-132. New York, 1839.



they empowered intolerant non-Catholics to rob the father of his child and the widow of her children.

The laws on education directed against Catholics were conceived in the spirit of Julian the Apostate, and modelled upon his system. The first free school was placed under the patronage of the Archbishop of Canterbury; its founders, as they declared, were good Protestants, and its object was to instruct youth in the orthodox religion. When provision was made for schools in each county, all the trustees were Protestants and the Rectors were chairmen of the Boards, and the masters were by law members of the Church of England. Catholics could not frequent them, and they were prevented from having schools of their own, because the teacher was liable to perpetual imprisonment.<sup>25</sup>

The Maryland colonial records are filled with *gravamina* against the Catholics, and the note sounded most often is the fact that "Popish schoolmasters are teaching children openly in school," and that "children of Popish parents are sent to St. Omer's." The *Maryland Gazette* of October 17, 1754, records the fact that "a great number of their [Catholic] youth were sent this year to foreign Popish seminaries."

For the work of educating the boys and girls at home before their entrance into these continental schools, there was, fortunately, an abundance of private tutors. Much of the eighteenth century in American educational annals centres around the Irish Catholic schoolmasters who had escaped from a land, where, "crouching 'neath the sheltering hedge or stretched on mountain fern, the teacher and his pupils met, feloniously to learn;" where the schoolmaster, because of his faith and his calling, was perforce a wanderer and an outlaw; and where the penal code made it high treason to encourage the education of Catholic children, to build a school house, or to send the children to a neighbour's house to be taught. This most frightful engine of persecution, as Edmund Burke called it, drove hundreds of the Irish schoolmasters out of Ireland, and during the eighteenth century the shipping-lists were filled with the names of emigrant teachers, many of whom were "redemptioners," seeking asylum here in America. New England soon possessed a large quota of these educated gentlemen, and Pennsylvania and Maryland were especially fortunate in this regard. Down to the outbreak of the American Revolution, these Irish schoolmasters taught in private

<sup>25</sup> DEVITT, *ut supra*, p. 142.

houses or in schools, supported by the people of the locality; and who shall say that it was not through them principally that the colonies began the work of severance across the Atlantic? Once the conflict with the mother country was seen to be inevitable, they taught their pupils to shoot and drill, or acted as clerks and adjutants to the local military companies.<sup>26</sup>

We have no means of knowing with certainty whether Daniel and Eleanor Carroll, the parents of John Carroll, availed themselves of one of these schoolmasters during the future bishop's boyhood (1735-1747); but in all probability, Jackey Carroll, as we find him called in the Bohemia College Account Book, received his elementary education at home. Mrs. Carroll's school days had been spent in France, and under her excellent training the boy was prepared for his secondary schooling at Bohemia. It was this home training, says the historian Shea, that gave him the ease, dignity, and polish which marked him through life.<sup>27</sup> At the age of twelve, or earlier, he was sent by his parents from Upper Marlboro to the recently erected Academy at Bohemia Manor. "We have no traces of his boyish days," writes his biographer, Brent, "except in the traditionary accounts of a promising development of genius, and uncommon docility of manners and disposition."<sup>28</sup> His stay at Bohemia was a short one, but it is the beginning of a long exile from home—an exile which was to last down to the eve of the American Revolution.

Bohemia Manor College, or Academy, was begun during the time when Father Thomas Poulton was in charge of the Mission of St. Francis Xavier, at Bohemia Manor, probably about the year 1744. The Academy lasted only a short time, for the laws against Catholic education and Catholic educators had become even more stringent at this period.<sup>29</sup> Burns writes:

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. O'BRIEN, *Early Irish Schoolmasters in New England*, in the *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. iii, pp. 52-71. Another phase of the story is told by the same writer in his *Hidden Phase of American History*. New York, 1919. For the presence of these Irish schoolmasters in Maryland, cf., E. H. BROWN, *First Free School in Queen Anne's County*, in the *Maryland Historical Magazine*, vol. vi, pp. 1-15.

<sup>27</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 27.

<sup>28</sup> *Biographical Sketch of the Most Rev. John Carroll, First Archbishop of Baltimore with Select Portions of His Writings*, p. 17. Baltimore, 1843.

<sup>29</sup> Article *Bohemia*, in the *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society* (Philadelphia), vol. xxii (June, 1913), p. 105. Cf. also *Our First College*, in the *Catholic Standard*, of Philadelphia, for February 11, 1888—a popular, though inaccurate account of the school.

The history of the institution is interesting, but the information that has come down to us regarding it is brief and fragmentary. Its origin is wrapped in obscurity; it was begun by stealth; its existence was precarious; and it appears to have been closed several times, owing to fresh outbursts of persecution. But it did, nevertheless, a great work; it helped to keep alive some sparks of the old Maryland faith, and provided a generation of educated Catholics—small in number but strong in faith and knowledge—who were fitted to champion the cause of the Church's freedom by word and deed, in the era of universal liberty ushered in by the Revolution. It was the last educational effort of the Jesuits in colonial Maryland, but the tattered pages of its register which still survives bear some of the most illustrious names in American Catholic history.<sup>30</sup>

In an old account book, now in the Georgetown Archives, we learn that John Carroll was entered in the school in 1747, when he was twelve years old. A further entry states that he came for a second time on April 22, 1748, apparently after a visit to his father and mother at Upper Marlboro. He left Bohemia on July 8, 1748, no doubt to begin preparations for the voyage across the Atlantic to St. Omer's. There is some doubt whether Charles Carroll of Carrollton, his cousin by marriage, was his classmate at Bohemia Academy, but the two boys made the journey to St. Omer's together and were collegians there for the next five years.<sup>31</sup> Among the other students at Bohemia were the Neales—Benedict, Edward, Charles, and Leonard, the last destined to succeed Carroll as Archbishop of Baltimore, in 1815, James Heath, and Robert Brent. The last named accompanied John and Charles Carroll to France, and in later life married the sister of the future archbishop. The classes taught at Bohemia Academy were both elementary and college-preparatory, including, along with writing, reading, and elementary mathematics for beginners, Latin, Algebra, and perhaps Greek for the more advanced students. The board and tuition fees were forty pounds a year for the preparatory department, and thirty pounds a year for the elementary school. At one time there were as many as forty pupils in the Academy. After Bohemia came the days of

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<sup>30</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 109-110; ROWLAND, *op. cit.*, vol i, pp. 18-20, has described Charles Carroll of Carrollton's school days there. Cf. *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. v, pp. 287-289; EASBY-SMITH, *History of Georgetown College (1789-1907)*, p. 9. New York, 1907.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. *Charles Carroll of Carrollton*, in the *Catholic World* (New York), vol. xxiii (1876), p. 541.



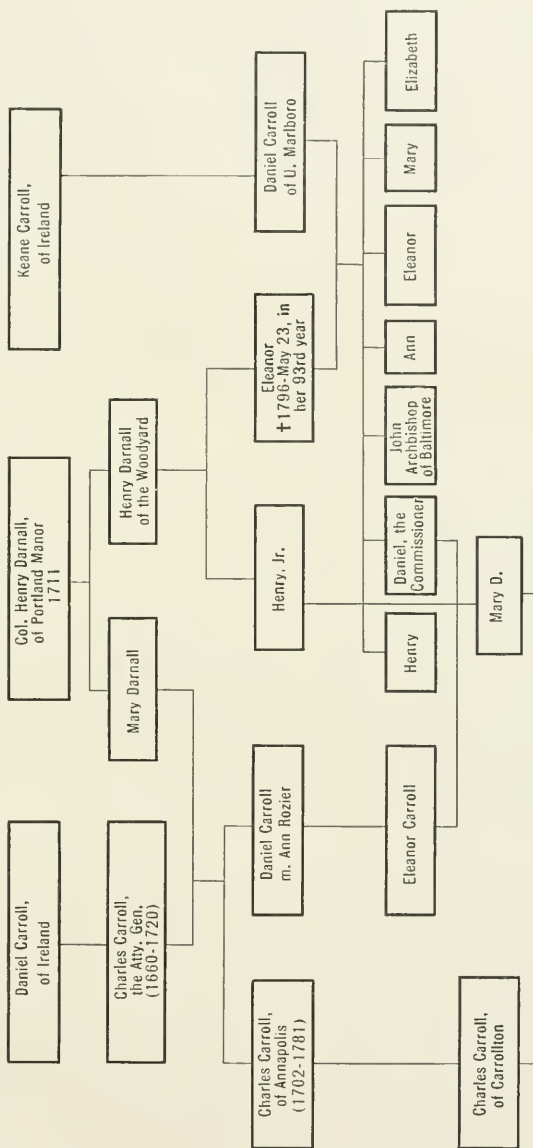
real college life at St. Omer's, in France, for the boys who intended to continue their studies.

Nothing more noble in American colonial life can be found than the determination of the Catholic parents of Maryland to preserve amongst their children the Faith for which their ancestors had fought, suffered, and died. The transmission of the doctrines and the discipline of the Church was a sacred obligation imposed upon them by their conscience; and at a time when to apostatize from the Catholic Faith was the open road to social and political advancement in the English dominions, there was a strength of purpose in the hearts of these Maryland mothers comparable in every respect to the mothers of the martyrs. To see their children go from their side for a sojourn of ten or fifteen years, and to be bereft of the happy, innocent faces of their boys and girls during that period when they are a parent's consolation, knowing that even on their return as educated gentlemen and women they would be politically outcasts, demanded a nobility of soul which is one of the brightest factors in the drab colonial history of America. Apart from the fact that Catholic parents could not compromise in the matter of education, there was an added reason why they refused to enter their children in the colonial schools of Maryland. The appalling description of the immoral conditions of these schools, as painted by the historians of the Established Church of Maryland and Virginia, needs but to be read to understand the abhorrence in which such educational masters must have been held by Catholic Maryland women. Children of cultured families like the Carrolls could not be trusted to schoolmasters unworthy of their calling, and with the laws ever on the alert against the establishment of Catholic educational institutions, one avenue of escape alone was open to the colonial Catholics, that which the Catholics of England, Ireland, and Scotland had taken for two centuries, namely, the colleges and convents in continental Europe.

John and Charles Carroll were the victims of the bigotry of their day, but both were to benefit by these years of training abroad and were to return as leaders in the struggle which eventually was to win freedom for their fellow-Catholics. To boys of their age, the perils of the long journey across the Atlantic were forgotten in the joyousness of the great adventure; but

there had been implanted in their hearts memories of the wrongs Protestant intolerance had inflicted upon their people, and the vision of tear-stained faces as they said good-bye had its place in determining their judgment when the call came to break forever with the tyranny of the motherland.

# CARROLL GENEALOGY





## CHAPTER II

### COLLEGE DAYS AT ST. OMER'S; THE JESUIT NOVITIATE AT WATTEN

(1748-1755)

The great chain of secular and religious educational establishments founded during the era of English intolerance by the English, Irish, and Scottish Catholics stretched from the English Channel to the Eternal City. The English Catholics were for the most part members of the noble and educated classes, and in spite of the ever-growing burdens of the penal code, they never wavered in their determination to keep bright and clear in the minds of their sons and daughters Catholic ideals of faith and of life. From the days when the disheartened Catholic students of England's two leading Universities sought in 1559 a refuge in Louvain, where they rented two houses, the one called "Oxford" and the other "Cambridge", down to the French Revolution over two centuries later, the English, Irish, and Scottish Catholics built schools and colleges for the boys, convent schools for the girls, and seminaries for the training of clerics. The story of this Foundation-Movement is one of the most inspiring pages in the history of education.<sup>1</sup> The list of these exiled Catholic educational institutions is a long one. Lisbon contained five such houses; Madrid, three; Paris, eight; Douay, five; Belgium, thirteen; France, outside Paris, seven; and Rome, two.

Of all the continental English Catholic schools St. Omer's was best loved by the boys of Maryland. It was founded in 1592 by the celebrated English Jesuit, Father Robert Persons, the companion of Blessed Edmund Campion, the choicest flower of the University of Cambridge. St. Omer's received mostly lay students and next to Douay quickly became the best-known

<sup>1</sup> The latest addition to the literature on the English Diaspora is CARDINAL GASQUET, *A History of the Venerable English College, Rome*. London, 1920. For various lists of these exiled establishments, see GUILDAY, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-49.

English college abroad. In 1616, James I issued a royal edict against the College, ordering the immediate return of all the boys therein under penalty of the confiscation of their parents' property. English spies kept the collegians under constant surveillance, and more than one boy was obliged to return home to prevent his parents from losing all they possessed. Before the Thirty Years' War the number of scholars had increased to two hundred. In 1684, the old College was burnt, but a larger College was quickly erected. In 1697-98, as we learn from a document in Propaganda Archives, the Seminary or College of St. Omer contained more students than any of the English houses abroad.<sup>2</sup> It was accepted as the best school for the noble and wealthy Catholic families of England during the penal period, and it was also the House of Studies for the formation of the Jesuits who were sent to the English and American missions. Maryland, indeed, can be looked upon to a great extent as a St. Omer's mission.<sup>3</sup> In 1725, a second fire destroyed the College, and it was to the third and more commodious building erected within the next few years that John Carroll came in 1747-48.

Unfortunately we have no record of any kind telling us of John Carroll's voyage across the Atlantic. *The Extracts from the Carroll Papers*, containing Charles Carroll of Carrollton's letters to his father,<sup>4</sup> and the *Unpublished Letters of Charles Carroll of Carrollton*<sup>5</sup> give us hardly a word of those adventurous days aboard the good ship that carried them to London, which was the first stop in the journey. But there is little doubt that the richest heir in America at that time lost no chance of making the journey a memorable one for his companion. Father Hughes has given us a racy and delightful sidelight upon one of these "educational convoys."<sup>6</sup> But the disappointing side to the correspondence which is extant for these years of Carroll's life is the meagre insight we are given into his daily round of duties

<sup>2</sup> *Stato del Seminario inglese di St. Omer*, Propaganda Archives, *Visite e Collegi*, t. 36 (1697-1698), fol. 735.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. WILLAERT, *A Catholic College in the Seventeenth Century* [St. Omer's] in the *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, vol. xxx (1905), pp. 745-748.

<sup>4</sup> In the *Maryland Historical Magazine* (Baltimore, since 1905).

<sup>5</sup> In the *Monograph Series*, No. 1, of the United States Catholic Historical Society (New York), 1902.

<sup>6</sup> HUGHES, *Educational Convoys to Europe in the Olden Times*, in the *American Ecclesiastical Review*, vol. xxix (1903), pp. 24-39.

and pleasures. John Carroll's letters from home would no doubt have given us his mother's reflections on his musings as a student, but they were lost in the confiscation of Bruges College in 1773. On several occasions the writer has searched the archival depots of Belgium and Northern France for these papers, but without success. John's letters to his parents—his father, Daniel Carroll, died in 1750—have also disappeared. There is no trace of John's correspondence in the Baltimore Cathedral Archives or in the Georgetown collection. For reasons alluded to already the correspondence of Charles Carroll of Carrollton with his parents has scarcely more than a passing reference to John. Carrollton's is the stilted letter-writing of the day and politics are the main staple. A visit of Charles Carroll, Sr., to Paris in 1757, gave John a chance to talk over home affairs, but there is nothing in the existing correspondence to show more than a cold interest on the part of the two families for each other. The French and Indian War (1754-1763) takes up a major space in the letters. There are constant fatherly injunctions. On August 30, 1758, we find Charles Carroll of Annapolis writing to "Dear Charley," his son—"Chuse your Company with ye greatest Circumspection, for Evil Communications corrupt good manners. Avoid any intimacy or familiarity with ye Fair Sex. But I should chuse that Women should allmost always make part of your Company, they will contribute to soften and polish yr. manners."<sup>7</sup> The next year he writes: "I challenge six Letters a year as a Debt by promise; if ye will generously fling in a few more, ye will give your Mama and me great pleasure."<sup>8</sup> In this same letter we are given a hint of troubles at home. "I find you begin to think that neither Maryland or any of ye British Dominions are a desirable Residence for a Roman Catholic; without a change in ye Scene, they certainly are not so." As is well known in Maryland annals, Charles Carroll of Annapolis had at one time contemplated selling all his property in Maryland to take up an estate in Louisiana, which was then in the possession of France; but his son dissuaded him, and fortunate it was for the future of the American Republic that Charles Carroll of Carrollton decided to remain. After Carrollton's return to Maryland in 1765, we lose all chance of

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<sup>7</sup> *Monograph Series*, p. 28, as cited in note 5.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.



reading between the lines of his letters the incidents that made up their college life at St. Omer's. Charles Carroll of Carrollton, after finishing his studies at St. Omer's, went to the College at Rheims, while John entered the Jesuit Novitiate at Watten.

St. Omer's College was a mixed school, made up of young men preparing for life in the world and of others preparing for the secular priesthood or for the religious life in one of the Orders or Congregations. It was similar to the system in vogue in France or Belgium, and its counterpart can be seen to a certain extent to-day in the system carried out at Mount St. Mary's College, Emmitsburg, where side-by-side with the collegiate course is a philosophical and theological school for training young aspirants to the priesthood.

What was probably the original copy of the Rules and Regulations of St. Omer's perished in the Sack of Louvain in August, 1914. A transcript, now in the Archives at Stonyhurst College, England, the successor to St. Omer's, enables us to form a very fair judgment on student life during the time of John Carroll's residence there.<sup>9</sup> The college compared more than favourably with the best European schools of the day. "Their annual exhibitions were attended by the English nobility, with the Bishop and clergy, secular and regular, and other scientific and learned men, who expressed their astonishment at the easy and fluent manner in which the scholars were accustomed to dispute and discourse in Greek and Latin, especially in the former."<sup>10</sup> The young men who made up the student-body were of exceptional character. "During the whole of my visit," wrote Cardinal Bentivoglio in

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. the description of the Seminaries of Douay and St. Omer given by Cardinal d'Ossat in a letter to Henry IV, November 26, 1601, in *Lettres du Cardinal d'Ossat*, p. 757. Meyer has also described the student-life in his *England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth*, translated by McKee (London, 1916), pp. 92, 121, 189-214. Cf. GUILDAY, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-145. Many references will be found in FOLEY, *Records S. J.*, as, for example, vol. i, p. 435; vol. iii, pp. 36, 99, 129, 161, 542, 723, 778; vol. iv, pp. 336, 552, 687; vol. v, pp. 12, 50, 70, 87, 88, 167, 707, especially pp. 168-173. ROWLAND, *op. cit.*, has given a glimpse into the student-life at St. Omer's in her chapter, *Student Life Abroad (1758-1764)*, vol. i, pp. 37-69. "The pupils of St. Omer's," she says (vol. i, p. 113), "certainly had the advantage over the graduates of Cambridge in the use of clear and forcible English." A complete history of St. Omer's is in FOLEY, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, part i, pp. 36-42. The best account of student-life at St. Omer's will be found in GERARD, *History of Stonyhurst College (1592-1894)*. Belfast, 1894.

<sup>10</sup> FOLEY, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 435, note. One favourite exhibition with the students was the annual Passion Play.



1609, "I truly seemed to be in Paradise and among angels. I was greatly edified, and moved even to sorrow, at seeing for the first and perhaps the last time so many choice plants in the Catholic Church destined to persecution, afflictions, and martyrdoms, as now I beheld springing up and growing around me."<sup>11</sup> The *Memoirs of Edmund Mathew*, written in 1667, is the best boy's account we possess of the inner life of the college, and while numerous changes must have taken place within the century that passed before John Carroll entered St. Omer's, the persistence of many of the customs today at Stonyhurst would argue for their existence in 1748, when he entered. The discipline was spartan in those days. Correction with the ferule was the ordinary mode of punishment. The students retired at nine and rose at five. Trap-ball was the favourite game. It is hardly likely that the young American measured up to the ideal described by the anonymous biographer of Edmund Mathew: "It happened once that as he was playing at trap-ball in the Guarden, one of his companions much against his will struck the ball full vppon his ey, the pain was certainly most intense, and woold haue drawn some word of indignation, or impatience from a vnmortified and impatient man. But this sweet Lamb immediately pronounces *Jesus, Deo Gratias*, and for to show that he was not in the least offended at him, by whose hand the sad chance happened; looked vppon him presently with a most lovely and gracious ey, knowing that he stood more in need of comfort than him selfe."<sup>12</sup> John Carroll certainly never took for his motto the one from "Doleful Jeremie," that seems to have directed Mathew's life—*non sedi in conciliis ludentium, solus sedebam*.

The college was well known in the colonies, and the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland both sent petitions at odd times to the Home Government, representing the danger which St. Omer's was to Protestant ascendancy in the provinces. John Gilmary Shea makes the following reflection regarding the re-

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<sup>11</sup> Vatican Archives, *Archivio Borghese*, vol. i, 1908. Part of this *Relazione d'Inghilterra* is printed in the original in GUILDAY, *op. cit.*, pp. 425-429. Cf. FOLEY, *Records S. J.*, vol. vii, part ii, pp. 1152-1155; TAUNTON, *History of the Jesuits in England*, p. 401. London, 1901.

<sup>12</sup> *Memoir of Edmund Mathew*, in the *Catholic Record Society Publications*, vol. iii, p. 66.

sults of this European training upon the young Americans who went to St. Omer's:

The effect of this continental education on the young Catholic gentlemen was clearly seen. As a class they were far superior to their Protestant neighbours, who, educated at home, were narrow and insular in their ideas, ignorant of modern languages and of all that was going on beyond their county limits and its fox hunts and races. The Catholic, on the contrary, was conversant with several languages, with the current literature of Europe, the science of the day, with art and the great galleries where the masterpieces of painting and sculpture could be seen. He returned to England or his colonial home after forming acquaintance with persons of distinction and influence, whose correspondence retained and enlarged the knowledge he had acquired.<sup>13</sup>

John Carroll finished his humanities in 1753; and on September eighth of that year, he was sent to the Jesuit Novitiate at Watten, a town about seven miles from St. Omer's. The house was an old abbey and was the gift of Bishop Blaise of St. Omer in 1603, but owing to the intrigues of Edmondes, the English agent at Brussels, it was not occupied until after the death of the Archduke Albert in 1622. It became the recognized novitiate for the English Province in 1625, and remained such until 1768, when a transfer was made to Ghent. Here it was that the "generation of vipers", as the English Agents Edmondes and Turnbull generally called the English Jesuits, was prepared for the spiritual work to come. With Carroll at Watten, Shea tells us, there were as fellow-novices: Joseph Hathersty, who died at Philadelphia on May 8, 1771; William Horne, Peter Jenkins, George Knight, Joseph Emmott, and Joseph Tryer. A fellow-countryman, Robert Cole, who did not return to Maryland after the Suppression, was in the novitiate at the time, as was also Joseph Reeve, the future ecclesiastical historian.<sup>14</sup> The novice-master was Father Henry Corbie, who was in charge at Watten from 1745 to 1756, provincial of the English Jesuits from 1756 to 1762, and again novice-master from 1764 to 1765, the year of his death.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 29.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 31, FOLEY's *Collectanea* contains biographies of these fellow-novices of Carroll, with the exception of Tryer. Father Joseph Hathersty, the only one who came to America, is not mentioned in KIRLIN, *Catholicity in Philadelphia* (Philadelphia, 1909). Cf. HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Text, vol. ii, p. 695.

<sup>15</sup> *Records S. J.*, vol. vii, part ii, p. 168.

With the exception of Henry More's celebrated essay, no complete history of the rise of the English Province of the Society of Jesus has yet been written.<sup>16</sup> England was to feel the full power of the Counter-Reformation from the moment that the two Jesuits, Blessed Edmund Campion and Robert Persons, reached London in 1580, and the frequency of Jesuit vocations among English Catholic youths was not only remarkable, but so pronounced that practically all the "stirs" which separated the secular and the regular clergy in English Catholic life during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries can be traced to the fact that a large majority of young men sought entrance into the Society. "During the persecution period," says Foley, "the number of Englishmen who became Jesuits sometimes rose to nearly one-half of all those who embraced the ecclesiastical state, and they began to join from the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, even before Douay College was founded (1569)."<sup>17</sup> From 1580 down to 1619, the English Jesuits conducted in England what is known as a Mission. In 1619, the Mission was raised to a Vice-Province, and on January 21, 1623, the Vice-Province became a regular Province of the Society. The whole of England was divided, as is the Jesuit system, into districts, and these were subdivided into residences or quasi-colleges. Over each residence or college a rector or superior was placed. This arrangement was duplicated in the English Colonies of America, and lasted down to the Suppression of the Society in 1773.

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<sup>16</sup> *Historia missionis anglicana Societatis Jesu, ab anno salutis MDLXXX ad MDCXIX, et vice-provincia primum, tum provincia ad ejusdem sæculi annum XXXV.* St. Omer, 1660. Cf. RIBADENEIRA, *Historia ecclesiastica del Scisma del Reyno del Inglaterra*. Madrid, 1588. POLLEN, *English Catholics in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth (1558-1580)*, London, 1920, while not *ex professo* a history of the Jesuits in England, will, when completed, be an introduction to his history of the English Province of the Society; TAUNTON, *History of the Jesuits in England* (London, 1901) is an important volume in this connection, but it is mainly given over to an attack on Father Robert Persons, S.J.; BRIDGEWATER, *Concertatio Ecclesiæ Catholicæ in Anglia, etc.* (Trier, 1588), is valuable for the same purpose.

<sup>17</sup> *Records S.J.*, vol. vii, part ii, p. 1240. Foley gives a catalogue of these Jesuits, *ibid.*, part i, p. 568. His *Collectanea* which make up the two parts of volume seven give an alphabetical list of names with short biographical and genealogical notices of the members of the English province from the beginning down to the suppression in 1773. Cf. DODD, *Church History of England*, vol. ii, p. 403, who gives a list of sixty-nine British subjects who became Jesuits between 1556 and 1580; and OLIVER, *Collection towards illustrating the Biography of the Scottish, English and Irish Members of the Society of Jesus*. London, 1881.

There were three classes of priests in the province: those who lived privately in the families of noble or wealthy Catholics, as chaplains and tutors, as for example, Father Charles Plowden, the chaplain at Lulworth Castle, the friend and correspondent of John Carroll during the greater part of the latter's life; those who travelled about the country in disguise, running grave danger of capture, and ministered to the Catholics; and those who were able to live in their own homes and receive the Catholics who came to them.<sup>18</sup>

To train missionaries for this dangerous field of spiritual endeavour was no easy task. A very thorough course in the humanities was necessary before the young student was allowed to enter the schools of philosophy and theology. Between the collegiate studies and philosophy there intervened for those who had entered the Society of Jesus a two years' novitiate.

We should deprive ourselves of one of the keys to John Carroll's character and to the events of his later life if we were to pass lightly over the two years of his novitiate at Watten, for those two years were spent almost exclusively in the formation of the religious spirit. It is the novitiate which gives the Jesuit that indefinable quality which distinguishes him from the members of all other religious Orders. It is erroneous to judge the Society of Jesus as a foundation with the avowed purpose of opposing Protestantism. Father John Hungerford Pollen, the eminent English Jesuit historian, says that when St. Ignatius began to devote himself to the service of the Church, he had probably not heard even the names of the Protestant Reformers.<sup>19</sup> During the earliest period of the Society's history, the Jesuits directed their steps to pagan lands; but, the object of the Society being to spread the faith, they naturally saw in the reclamation of lands lost to the Church through the Reformation another important field of endeavour. The Constitutions upon which the Society was based were composed by St. Ignatius and have never been altered in the passing of the centuries since their approval by the first congregation of the Jesuits, held in 1558.

The members of the Society of Jesus fall into four classes: *novices*, intended either for lay duties or for the priesthood. The

<sup>18</sup> Cf. MORRIS, *Condition of Catholics under James I*, pp. 329ss. London, 1872.

<sup>19</sup> Article *Society of Jesus*, in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. xiv, p. 81.

latter novices, at the end of two years, make simple but perpetual vows and become *formed scholastics*, who in turn spend a certain number of years, usually ten to fifteen, in teaching and in studying for the priesthood. After a thorough review of the Constitutions of the Society and examinations in all the branches of philosophical, scriptural, and theological studies, the scholastics having been ordained become spiritual *formed coadjutors* with simple vows, or *professed* with solemn vows; the latter besides the three vows of religion, make a fourth vow of obedience to the Holy See in the matter of missionary work. The lay brothers after a number of years' probation become temporal formed coadjutors with simple perpetual vows.

The novices usually enter, as John Carroll did, on a fixed day; in his case, the eighth of September. The first ten days are spent in acquainting themselves with the rule of the novitiate. Then follows a brief spiritual retreat, after which, if they are acceptable, they become novices and assume the clerical habit or soutane. The day is spent in meditation, prayer, spiritual reading, study, and manual labour. There is a daily conference by the Master of Novices on the *Institute*, and all are examined on the Rule at certain periods. The thirty days' retreat, based on the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, is the chief test of the novice's character, and this comes sometime within the first year.

In accordance with the ideals set forth in these exercises, of disinterested conformity with God's will, and of personal love of Jesus Christ, the novice is trained diligently in a meditative study of the truths of religion, in the habit of self-knowledge, in a constant scrutiny of his motives, and of the actions inspired by them, in the correction of every form of self-deceit, illusion, plausible pretext, and in the education of the will, particularly in making choice of what seems best after careful deliberation and without self-seeking. Deeds, not words, are insisted upon as proof of genuine service, and a mechanical, emotional, or fanciful piety is not tolerated. As the novice gradually thus becomes master of his judgment and will, he grows more and more capable of offering to God the reasonable service enjoined by St. Paul, and seeks to follow the Divine Will, as manifested by Jesus Christ, by His Vicar on earth, by the bishops appointed to rule His church, by his more immediate or religious superiors, and by the civil powers rightfully exercising authority.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> POLLEN, *ut supra*.



The noviceship lasts two full years and at its conclusion simple vows are taken, the novices being then promoted to the degree of scholastics. If their college studies are not finished, they then follow a special course, usually lasting two years. When these studies have been completed, the scholastics go to another house, usually called the scholasticate, where they spend three years studying philosophy and science. After this, from three to seven years are devoted to teaching in one of the public colleges of the Society. Then begins the study of theology, which is generally of four years' duration. At the end of the third year of theology, the priesthood is conferred, and at the completion of the entire preparation of fifteen or seventeen years, another year is devoted to the second novitiate, the tertianship, in which the recently ordained Jesuit renews the spirit of piety acquired at the beginning of his career and is enabled to reorganize all his studies upon the basis of their practical utility for his own spiritual and academic life.<sup>21</sup>

At the age of eighteen, when he had finished the novitiate, John Carroll had reached the most impressionable period of his life, and it would be of untold value to us if we could discover the hidden springs from which he drew those remarkable qualities which gave him leadership in the days when leadership was badly needed in the American Church. We know that as a novice his life was one of entire self-sacrifice, childlike obedience, perfect poverty, and self-denial. Indoors, much of the housework and menial employment fell to his share; if he went out he was occupied in visiting hospitals and in catechising poor children in and around the city. In the old days the novice was sent, once during the novitiate, on a pilgrimage, which generally lasted a month. This was performed with one companion, always on foot, both begging their bread the whole way. No doubt this part of the training had fallen into disuse at this time. Even a very hazy knowledge of the religious life would permit one to realize the resultant effect of these two years on the young

<sup>21</sup> BRUCKER, *La Compagnie de Jésus: esquisse de son Institut et de son Histoire (1521-1733)*, pp. 20-46. Paris, 1920; *The Jesuits, Their Foundation and History*, p. 34. (By B. N.), London, 1879; *Rules of the Society of Jesus*, Washington, 1839; ROSSETTI, *De Spiritu Societatis Jesu*, pp. 153ss, Freiburg, 1888; MESCHLER, *La Compagnie de Jésus: ses Statuts et ses Résultats*, trans. MAZOYER, Paris, 1921. The latest contribution to the subject, and the first history of the Society, written by an American, is CAMPBELL, *The Jesuits* (2 vols., New York, 1921).

American. At this time he was at the most malleable stage in the soul's life, and it is hardly an over-estimate to state that in these two years of solid piety and of practical spirituality in the Jesuit novitiate the secret of John Carroll's religious fervour, apostolic zeal, and high-minded independence of thought is to be found.



### CHAPTER III

#### THE LIÈGE SCHOLASTICATE; ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD; TERTIANSHIP

(1755-1773)

JOHN CARROLL completed his novitiate on September 8, 1755, and the next step was the study of philosophy at Liège, where the scholasticate was situated. The English College at Liège was begun as early as 1614, when Father John Gerard, of Gunpowder Plot fame, bought a house and some ten acres of land there for the purpose of founding the scholasticate. The province of Liège, though part of the Holy Roman Empire, was at the time a sovereign principality, with the bishop as sovereign-prince, a status which had lasted from the time of Bishop Notger (1008) and continued until the French Revolution. As a buffer-state between Germany, France, and the Low Countries, its history is written large on the pages of medieval and modern times. Its schools were famous long before the University of Paris opened its doors, and this fact, together with its neutral position in matters touching France and England, made it a haven of refuge for the persecuted English Catholics.<sup>1</sup> The scholasticate combined a continuance of the religious life of the novitiate with a rigid course of study in philosophy, rhetoric, literature, the natural sciences and higher mathematics.

In 1758, John Carroll finished his philosophy and was sent back to St. Omer's, to teach the classics to the collegians;<sup>2</sup> here he was still teaching when the Suppression of the Society was decreed by the *Parlement* of Paris (August 6, 1762). The edict

<sup>1</sup> Cf. DARIS, *Histoire du diocèse et de la principauté de Liège: des origines à 1879*. Liège, 1869-1892; KURTH, *La Cité de Liège au Moyen-Age*. Liège, 1910. The history of the English College or Scholasticate will be found in FOLEY, *Records S.J.*, vol. vii, part i, pp. 47-53; cf. *ibid.*, vol. v, p. 185.

<sup>2</sup> SHEA (*op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 32), says that he was next employed at Liège, as professor of philosophy and of theology in the scholasticate, but this is evidently based on the inaccurate date he gives for Carroll's ordination, namely, 1759.

was signed by Louis XV, in November, 1764, and from that date the Jesuits in France were proscribed. St. Omer's College was confiscated by the French Government and was transferred to the English secular clergy. Differences of an acrimonious nature had been only too common between these two bodies of the English Catholic priesthood, and the transfer added its quota to the "everlasting jars" of the period.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Burton writes:

Letters, memorials and pamphlets appeared in profusion; voluminous collections of documents were made and preserved as *pièces justificatives*, connected accounts were written and even published. On the side of the Society Father Ralph Hoskins compiled *A Short Narrative of the Expulsion of the English Jesuits out of St. Omer's*, and Father Joseph Reeve wrote his *Plain and Succinct Narrative of Facts Concerning the Expulsion of the English Jesuits from their College at St. Omer's*; while a layman, Ralph Hodgson, taking up the case for the seculars, produced in 1768, his *Dispassionate Narrative of the Conduct of the English Clergy in Receiving from the French King and His Parliament the Administration of the College at St. Omer, late under the Direction of the English Jesuits*.<sup>4</sup>

Evil days had come in the history of the great Company of Jesus. Portugal began the work of banishment in 1759; France followed, and the prestige of the Society waned quickly under the blows dealt by the Jansenists and by writers like Pascal and Voltaire. Madame de Pompadour could never forget the attitude of the Jesuits to her invidious situation at the French Court, and when the University of Paris was influenced against them, the Fathers saw that the end was fast approaching. The unfortunate bankruptcy of Father La Valette was seized upon by the Government as the opportune occasion to crush the Society. The decree of August 6, 1762, was at first interpreted by the English Jesuits as inapplicable to them on national grounds; but the French commissioners had already decided to entrust the college to the English seculars. On August 9, 1762, the college boys were called together and told to prepare for the worst. "Without exception all decided to follow their masters, and their adventurous journey to Bruges began. Without luggage of any kind,

<sup>3</sup> Cf. BURTON, *Life and Times of Bishop Challoner*, vol. ii, pp. 395s., for a complete account of this transfer.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 40. The *Narrative* by Father Reeve will be found in FOLEY, *Records S. J.*, vol. v, pp. 168-173; the original MSS. are in the Stonyhurst Archives.

and carrying nothing to excite suspicion, they left the college in detachments as if on walking parties. But these walking parties never returned. To disarm the suspicions of the authorities, the usual amount of provisions was sent in to the college, while all the time the fugitives were well on their way to the frontier. They reached Bruges safely on the 11th of the month, no one at St. Omer being yet the wiser."<sup>6</sup> Dr. Burton, from whom we take the foregoing paragraph, has given a vivid description of this flight, certainly famous in the school annals of England, and of the negotiations for the restoration of the college to the English Jesuits, which continued from 1762 down to the day when, *muneris sui necessitate compulsus et pacis causa*, Clement XIV universally suppressed the Society (1773).<sup>6</sup>

John Carroll was then a young scholastic of twenty-seven years; and though his name is not mentioned in the different narratives of the expulsion and flight, we find him at Bruges with the boys setting up the new establishment. It was a serious thing to accomplish, to lead one hundred and forty scholars across the frontier in safety and to keep their courage to the sticking point. It was no students' lark, but a real test and hardship. Even when they came to Bruges, disappointment awaited them; for, instead of the stately buildings, the spacious rooms, and the furnished apartments at St. Omer's, they discovered in the house set aside for them nothing but naked walls and empty chambers—the dismal specimen of an old shapeless Spanish dwelling-house, as Father Reeve describes it. But forlorn as was their situation, it was no small consolation to find themselves in a country where the violence of the French Government was no longer to be apprehended. The confidence reposed in their masters by the parents at home was remarkable, for the change was made without a single scholar being withdrawn. The boys submitted to all the inconveniences of their comfortless state with singular tractability, and the generosity of the other English religious houses in Bruges soon made the new college comfortable and home-like.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> BURTON, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 50.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. CRÉTINEAU-JOLY, *Clément XIV et les Jésuites*, Paris, 1847; DEPLACE, *La Suppression des Jésuites in Études*, vol. cxvi (July 5, 20, 1908), pp. 69-96, 228-247; SMITH, *Suppression of the Society of Jesus in the Month*, vol. xcix (1903); BRUCKER, *La Compagnie de Jésus*, pp. 810-822. Paris, 1920.

<sup>7</sup> FOLEY, *Records S. J.*, vol. v, p. 168.

It was about this time, says Shea, that John Carroll renounced in favour of his brother Daniel and his four sisters, Ann, Ellen, Mary, and Elizabeth, all claims to the property of his father. This, of course, was in accordance with the Jesuit Rule, which requires a vow of poverty. We now come to a hazy part of the chronology in Carroll's life. If he gave five years of his scholastic days to the work of teaching at St. Omer's and Bruges (1758-1763), it is probable that he returned to Liège in 1763 for the purpose of beginning his four years of theology. At Liège, it was easy for him to resume the old life; the months quickly changed into years, and he was soon ready for ordination. Usually ordination to the priesthood follows the end of the third year of theology; the date, therefore, of his ordination would be 1766-67. If, however, he spent four years at his theological studies, then it would be 1767-68. If instead of five years at teaching, he had spent seven, owing to the disturbed conditions at the new college at Bruges, the date of his ordination would be 1769. This is the date given by Brent in his *Biographical Sketch*.<sup>8</sup> Shea, who follows B. U. Campbell, places his ordination year as 1759.<sup>9</sup> Campbell writes: "He was ordained priest in 1759, being in the twenty-fourth year of his age."<sup>10</sup> Twenty-four is certainly an exceptionally early age for ordination in the Society of Jesus. The fact that Father Carroll was professed on February 2, 1771, would argue for the year 1769, since profession is preceded by the second novitiate or tertianship, which takes a full year.

It is regrettable that only one letter of John Carroll's correspondence during this time has been found. Writing from Liège, on May 24, 1764, to his brother Daniel, the future Signer of the American Constitution, John tells him that he is taking advantage of Carrollton's return to Maryland to send a letter to the homefolks:

<sup>8</sup> Page 18. This is the date given by the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, s. v. Carroll.

<sup>9</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 32.

<sup>10</sup> *Memoirs of the Life and Times of the Most Rev. John Carroll*, in the *United States Catholic Magazine* (Baltimore), vol. iii (1844), p. 34. I found no record of his ordination in the Episcopal Archives at Liège during my search there in 1914. Bishop Charles Van Outremont was the occupant of the See at that time (1763-1771). I was told that many of his papers disappeared in the French Revolution. They may be elsewhere in Belgian or French Archives, but a diligent inquiry failed to reveal them.

*Dear Brother:*

Upon notice that our Cousin, Charles Carroll, is upon the point of setting out from London, I cannot fail profiting by this opportunity, though upon a supposition that he would have sailed last month I inclosed a letter to you dated end of March which I hope he has forwarded as I directed him to do. You will easily conceive I am under a good deal of uneasiness when I tell you I have not heard from Maryland for about this twelvemonth and I should be at a loss to know whether my friends there were alive or dead if my Uncle's letter had not mentioned them. I am sorry that the return of peace which I hoped would greatly facilitate our correspondence has not hitherto afforded me that advantage. My uncle is advised by his daughters that you design [*to come*] to Europe this year and to see us in Flanders. If this prove true I shall derive abundant compensation from the pleasure of your conversation. My uncle boards with the English nuns of this town and his conduct gives as general satisfaction as his company does entertainment. It will not be necessary for me to write this time separately to our Dearest Mother as this will be delivered into her hands if you are out of the country and if not you will communicate with her.

My Uncle desires his love to you all and especially to our Dearest Mother whose blessing I ask for myself and whom I hope this may find well. Let my sisters know I always bear them in mind. Assure Messrs. Brent of my love and other friends of my best well wishes, not forgetting above all my uncle John Darnal. I know not if you next will find me at Liège as I am uncertain what destination I may have, after having finished my course of Philosophy which will be now in two months. But at all events forward your letters to Mr. Poyntz with Mr. Wright, Banker, in Henriette Street, Covent Garden, and they will reach me. I am at a loss for want of letters from you whom to apply to for money this year. Write as soon as possible and believe me to be,

*Dear Brother,*

*Your most affectionate Brother,*

JOHN CARROLL.<sup>11</sup>

Some time after his reception of the four vows which made him a full-fledged member of the Society of Jesus, Carroll's superiors were asked by Lord Stourton, an English Catholic nobleman, for permission to allow the young American priest, who was then teaching at Bruges, to accompany his son on a year's tour of Europe.<sup>12</sup> They set out about the beginning of

<sup>11</sup> *Georgetown Archives*, cf. *Researches*, vol. xiii, pp. 26-27.

<sup>12</sup> Charles-Philip, sixteenth Lord Stourton, was born in 1752, and died in 1816. Cf. BURKE, *Peerage*, pp. 1060-1061; KIRK, *Biographies of Distinguished Catholics in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1909), p. 221. He was connected by marriage with the leading noble Catholic families of England, the Petres, Howards, Vavasours, and with that of the Duke of Norfolk, the premier Duke of the realm. He was a young man



the summer of 1771. Carroll's incomplete *Journal* of this tour has been published by Brent,<sup>13</sup> who claims that, "remarkable for its just and wise reflections, it is replete with the classical taste and erudition of the writer and indulges in a free criticism upon the journals of former travellers over the same ground."<sup>14</sup> With an old-fashioned atlas of the time in one's hand, it is not difficult to follow Carroll's itinerary, but the *Journal* on the whole is disappointing. It has the air of having been composed after his return, from notes taken hurriedly en route. He says in the first part of the *Journal*: "I have not now by me some memorials I had on the subject, and do not remember." John Carroll did not have the historical sense. His style is the literary style of the times and while the *Journal* pleases, his "reflections" are commonplace and result only in casting a brilliant haze over what must have been a rare opportunity for displaying his personality. A long quasi-historical account of Alsace opens the *Journal*, but at no point do we touch the personal note, so dear to travellers since travelling began. His description of the legal institutions of Alsace is followed by the statement that this may appear extraordinary to the English reader. Only twice do the words "I am told" appear. There are the usual commonplaces about the religious state of the country, the industry of the inhabitants, the fertility of the soil, the mountains, the fir trees, the agreeable table wine, and the roads. Strassburg and Colmar are the only towns mentioned in this part of the *Journal*. He is especially struck by the noble Cathedral of Strassburg, and the fine palace of the bishop. "Nothing pleased me more than the admirable

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of nineteen when he and Carroll started out to tour the Continent. Shortly after his return, he married on June 15, 1775, the daughter of Baron Langdale. He had a prominent place in the days of the English Committee (1782-91), when a species of Gallicanism had control of the Catholic laity in England. The story is told by Charles Butler in his *Historical Memoirs* (vol. ii, pp. 2-26). Ward has given a detailed account of Lord Stourton's part in the Committee in his *Dawn of the Catholic Revival in England (1781-1803)*, vol. i, pp. 87-96. London, 1909. A significant parallel between the attitude of the Committee in England and the American clergy during these same years (1782-1791) might be drawn. Ward tells us that the more moderate members had various objections to the system of government by vicars-apostolic. They did not wish to be ruled by those who were nominally bishops of foreign Sees, and opposed the idea of the Church in England being subject to indirect jurisdiction (cf. *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 99). The Congregation of Propaganda Fide does not seem to have been very popular in English-speaking countries at this time (*Ibid.*, p. 105).

<sup>13</sup> As an appendix to his *Biographical Sketch*, pp. 223-276.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.

gildings of the stucco work of the ceilings." A rector of one of the parishes tells him that forty families had come to his village in twenty-five years. "I found in general, on the best information I could obtain, that in time of peace, the inhabitants multiply very fast." After Alsace came Lorraine. "I cannot be so particular," he writes, "with regard to the province of Lorraine, though we saw a great part of it." A long eulogy of King Stanislaus is given in this section of the *Journal*. The only town described is Nancy. "From Lorraine and Alsace, we proceeded across the Rhine into the empire." Baden-Baden was first reached, and he remarks: "France has an easy entrance into Germany, whenever she wishes it." From the city of Baden the travellers went to Rastadt and then to Carlsruhe. Carroll was taken ill in Strassburg "with fever and ague, which put it out of my power to get the information of the country which I wished." The educational activities in the principality attracted his attention, and he mentions with pleasure the fact that every parish was provided with an able schoolmaster, who taught the children reading, writing, arithmetic, and surveying, "without being any charge to the parents." School attendance was obligatory on all. From Carlsruhe they journeyed to Bruschal, "where the bishop and prince of Spire keeps his court." Young Stourton did some of the sight-seeing alone at this time, for Carroll was ill and confined to bed. After Bruschal they visited Heidelberg and Mannheim. The Elector's palace in the former city contained "a noble library of about forty thousand volumes." The Jesuit professors at the University gave him a pleasant welcome, and he mentions by name Fathers Desbillons and Meyer, and the two librarians in the Elector's palace. Desbillons was a classicist and Meyer an astronomer. From Mannheim, the master and his pupil went to Cologne, passing through Worms and Trier. "I shall say nothing of these countries, except that they produce great quantities of corn and wine." They then returned to Mannheim and set out through Würtemberg for Augsburg in Bavaria. "One observation, however, the traveller through this country [*Bavaria*] cannot avoid making," he says, "which is the strange contrast between the magnificence and politeness of the court of the Duke of Würtemberg, which lies on the road, and the uncouthness of the other inhabitants." He found the road from Augsburg to Munich



in general disagreeable. "The harvest of 1771, was just gotten in," he writes, so the travellers had no doubt journeyed quickly. He notes the magnificence of the Jesuit church, and here, for the first time, we find him writing a page of praise for the labours of the Jesuits. From Munich the journey continued through the Tyrol and thence into Italy. "Inspruch, the capital of Tyrol, affords a few things remarkable." After Innsbruck, came Trent. "This town is famous for the holding of the last general council. . . . The church of St. Mary Major, in which it was held, has nothing particular besides a remarkably fine organ. But the remembrance of that august assembly which met in it so often, and procured so great services to Christianity, made me view it as one of the most awful sanctuaries in the world, and I could not refrain from expressing my gratitude to the Author of all good." The journey continued along the Adige to Rovereto and then to Verona. "We had now fairly emerged into Italy. It is impossible for the most saturnine constitution not to feel some of that enthusiasm, which the remembrance of great men and great actions, the remains of arts and sciences, the monuments of sway and magnificence are apt to excite in every cultivated mind." His knowledge of Italian at the time was rather meagre, and he states his determination to wait for the return journey before describing Verona, Mantua, Modena, and Bologna. He takes exception to several English descriptions of Italy, Addison's among them, and argues for the superiority of Italian achievement. Here the *Journal*, or at least that part of it which is extant, ends. Carroll and young Stourton continued their journey to Rome. Shea says:

How under more favorable circumstances the Eternal City would have impressed the American priest cannot be known; but it chilled rather than inflamed his devotion. Rome, which had treasured the remains of the founder of the Society, Saint Ignatius, of Saint Francis Borgia, Saint Aloysius, Saint Stanislaus, now looked with such disfavor on the Order to which he belonged that the American Jesuit was compelled to conceal his character; he endeavored to see Fathers of his province who were personal friends; but as they were out of Rome, he could hold no intercourse with the members of the Society. He saw sold in the streets without restraint libels on the Jesuits in which the prayers of the Mass were burlesqued, and treatises assailing the Devotion of the Sacred Heart

of Jesus. The overthrow of the Society of Jesus was the common topic, and was expected when Spain declared her will.<sup>15</sup>

The autumn of 1772 was spent at Naples, and the following winter and part of the spring of 1773 in Rome, to which city they had returned on October 22, 1772. Leaving Rome about the end of March, they began the return journey, which included Florence, Genoa, Loretto, Turin, Lyons, and Paris; and from Paris the two travellers went to Liège, where they ended their tour in July, 1773.

The Stonyhurst Archives possess four important letters, written by Father John Carroll during this European tour.<sup>16</sup> They are written to Father Thomas Ellerker, one of his colleagues at Liège, and contain not only first-hand historical evidence for the story of the suppression of the Society, but also afford us an insight into John Carroll's character. Here and there the spirit is bitter, but it could hardly be otherwise; and as one of the few English-speaking Jesuits in Rome at the time, the complaisance of the authorities of the Church toward the Bourbon intriguers burned a remembrance into Carroll's mind which was not forgotten when he came in later years to treat with the same officials. Cardinal Marefoschi, who is mentioned in the letters, had been Secretary of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide and was an avowed enemy of the Jesuits. That the end of the Society of Jesus was near at hand is evident from the first of these letters, written at Rome, January 23, 1772:

*My dear Sir,*

Our catastrophe is near at hand, if we must trust to present appearances, and the talk of Rome. The intelligence, which was talked of some time ago, importing that Spain had acceded at length to the Pope's plan, is greatly confirmed by universal persuasion at present; and I am assured that some of our best friends in the Sacred College, tho' not admitted to State secrets yet now look upon the determination of our fate as entirely certain. All this notwithstanding, I am far from regarding this intelligence as infallible; to be sure, we have great reason to fear it to be true; but we have been alarmed so often during the present

<sup>15</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 36-37.

<sup>16</sup> I am indebted to Father John Hungerford Pollen for some thirty letters written by Carroll, which were formerly in the Stonyhurst Archives but are now in the Archives at Farm Street, London. They are quoted in this work as *Stonyhurst Transcripts*.

Pontificate with like reports, and the date of our destruction has been fixed so often without anything coming of it, that I hope this will have the same issue. Our friends however hope in nothing but the interposition of providence: and indeed by the attack made against the Sacred heart & so much encouraged here, the cause of J. C. has been so closely connected with ours, that this cannot fail of giving much confidence under the present dreadful appearances. Another very late fact may corroborate the idea you have probably formed of the spirit of the times here. On the feast of the chair of S. Peter, it is customary for a graduate of ye Sapienza to make a discourse before the pope. The young man, who made it this year, proved the truth of ye doctrine of the Rom: see from the constant succession of its pastors, and having occasion to introduce the mention of heresies springing from the poisoned minds of their founders, he said *Ante Nestorium non fuere Nestoriani, ante Lutherum, Lutherani etc., nec ante Jansenium fuere Jansenisti*. You will not believe that at Rome this was looked upon as highly blameable, and I was astonished beyond measure when I heard the poor ignorant child Gastaldi, who hears all the Card'l York's family discourse, wondering how the orator came to rank Jansenius amongst the sectaries, or Jansenism amongst the heresies. I am assured likewise that when printed copies of the discourse were afterwards carried to the Card'ls according to custom, Marefoschi refused taking his, saying he would not have it because Jansenius made in it the figure of an archheritick. You have probably heard that this Card'l has begun a visit of a College left under the administration of the Gen'l called from its founder Fucili College. He has Alfani for cooperator, & no doubt between them they will make fine work of it.

My situation at Rome affords me many opportunities of hearing the sentiments of the uninterested publick on the present situation of affairs. You may be assured that discontents against the Government are very high, particularly on account of the omnipotence of F'r Bontempi, & one Bischì & his wife. The scandalous chronicle says the Lady in particular is a great favourite of Bontempi; it is certain that the pope is entirely governed by this junto, & that not one gentleman of Rome has any interest with them. Their hatred against the favourites is great of course; perhaps it extends in some measure to the master, whom they seldom go near. I have inclosed to L'd Stourton a copy of the mass printed and circulated here by Almada; you will receive it from his Lds'h, after which I desire you to forward it to Ch. Plowden at Bruges. That Almada should get such a thing printed, is not surprizing to those who know what a fool, or madman rather, he is; but that so horrid a profanation of the Church prayers & its most august sacrifice should pass unnoticed in the very center of Catholicity, is astonishing, and gives a strange idea of the toleration allowed here to every thing done or said against us, while oppressed innocence is not allowed to urge the least defence in its favour. The Dominican F'r Mamachi, of whom Zacheria often

makes honourable mention, & who had gained much reputation by former works, has been gained over to Spain, & to serve certain ambitious views, has just published a work in favour of Palafox's orthodoxy. But when I see you, I will let you into some anecdotes concerning that prelate's cause; which will convince you of its being lost beyond recovery. In the meantime, with compliments, as usual,

*I remain Dr. Sir*

*Ever yours*

J. C.

In a second letter to Father Ellerker, sent from Rome on October 22, 1772, we learn the reasons for Carroll's incognito, to which reference has been made:

*My dear Sir,*

I suppose this will find you returned from England, tho you have not yet given me any account of it. We are just arrived at Rome, viz: the 22d of this month. My intention was to proceed the next day for Naples before any suspicion could be formed of my character here; but certain accidents will detain us here till the 27th—I keep a close incog. during this time, not going to any of our houses. I called privately to see Thorpe & Hothersall; but they were both in ye country: so that having had no manner of communication with any J't, I can send you no news concerning the affairs of ye Society. I heard it said in some company that such Sp. Jts, as being Europeans would not secularize themselves, would be obliged to settle in Majorca: the natives of America to be fixed in the Canaries. This will be a saving to Spain of a great sum of money, which is every year sent out of the country. I heard on the same occasion that the *luoghi di monte*, that is, the publick funds of this town have orders to issue no money to the *soidisans*, tho' they are concerned for great sums in them, several Colleges having great part of their foundations lying there. But this, as well as other points I have not been able to clear up for the reasons above mentioned. The immediate cause of the Suppression of the Irish College was a petition presented by the alumni to return to the Jesuit schools. Cardl Marefoschi foamed with wrath, and violently insisted on the pope's taking the step which ensued. We were much entertained on our road from Bologna hither. The fine road along side of the Adriatick from Rimini to Loretto is most delightful. But of this and my other travelling observations you shall hear more at my return. A thousand comp'ts to Plowden, who got, I hope, my letter from Milan: he shall hear from me likewise, either from Naples or at my return. I am in debt likewise to Ch. Wharton. I cannot yet tell where my lodgings will be when we come back; but a letter to Mons. Carroll Seigneur Anglois at Rome, or inclosed to the English College will find me. Remember to pray for me; I did most earnestly for you at Loretto. Comp'lts to all my

friends as usual. Ask Plowden if he remembers all the curious sepulchral inscriptions in the Church of S. Maria del Popolo. If he does not I will send him a couple, one of which is the most singular I believe anywhere extant.

*Ever affcly. yours*

J. CARROLL

Later, on February 3, 1773, he tells Father Ellerker of the progress made by the enemies of the Society in the affair of the Suppression:

*My dear Father,*

You Liegois are sad correspondents—I dare say you are curious to hear news, and yet give no encouragement to your friends to write. Yet you have many particularities to communicate to us at this distance, which would give some relief to the gloom which overspreads us here at Rome. The report of an agreement being at length settled with Spain has subsisted now so long, that it gains very much credibility. The articles of it are said to be, 1, depriving the Jesuits of their general, 2 subjecting them to ye ordinaries, as a congregation of priests, 3 Forbidding them (I suppose those of the Ecclesiastical state) to admit any supplies into their body. 4. Avignon to be restored. 5. The town of Aquila with its dependencies to be ceded to the pope in lieu of Benevento. 6. Castro & Ronciglione to be recognized formally as belonging to the Holy See. This agreement with Spain will be published, 'tis said, about Easter. It is likewise stipulated (tho not expressed in the paper which circulates about Rome) that the Jesuits are all to be sent at least 20 miles from hence, that they may not keep up a spirit of fanaticism [*sic*] and blind zeal amongst the Cardinals and prelates.

While the Irish College was under the Jesuits, a vineyard belonging to it was sold to the Novitiate of S. Andrew. A commission is now made out for Cardl Marefoschi and four prelates to examine if the interests of the College were not sacrificed on this occasion: care has been taken to secure a proper determination by joining with the Card'l two Neapolitan Prelates, whose dependencies must necessarily influence their judgments against the Novitiate. Perhaps likewise the other two are as sure tools, as any that have been employed for some time past in this kind of work. I know not whether in my mentioned [*sic*] in my last that Marefoschi was likewise appointed Visitator (& Alfani his secretary) of a small College, called from ye prelate its Founder, Fucili College, which is destined for the education of a certain number of Clergymen, & tho not immediately governed by the Society, yet entirely under its direction and superintendency. The deceased prefect founded a chaplaincy disposeable by the Gen'l for a mass to be said every day at ye altar of S. Xavier of ye Gesu. The other day, the Cardl Visitor sent an order forbidding under pain of excommunication that mass to be continued. The order, & much more the strange sanction surprised every-



body and appears very irregular for the very first notice was sent to ye administrators. But I believe they are in the right, who imagine the Card'l by such proceeding has no other intention, than to impress the minds of the publick with an idea that the most violent methods are necessary to inforce obedience from those refractory spirits. Another very serious affair here is that the presses swarm with writings against the devotion to the Sacred Heart. What a revolution of ideas do all these proceedings produce in a mind accustomed to regard this city as the seat of Religion, and the bulwark against the incroachments of irreligion and impiety? Some of the most understanding as well as virtuous men here are persuaded entirely that the J'ts will be expelled Rome, that they will lose the Rom: College, Gesu etc. but still that no essential alteration will be made in the Institute: but for the ground of their hopes, they can only alledge their trust in providence. My affte. compliments as usual. I most sincerely congratulate you and your good fellow-professor for the ceremony yesterday.

*Drst. Fr.*

*Ever yrs.*

J. C.

Remember me kindly to F. F. Hodgson & Clifton.

The last of these letters, dated June 23, 1773, at Loretto, shows how poignant was Carroll's grief over the inevitable Suppression. Cardinal York, who is spoken of in these letters, was the last of the royal Stuarts. The second son of James Francis Edward, he was known to the Jacobites as Henry IX, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland. Created cardinal at the age of twenty-two (1747), he was ordained priest the following year, and in 1761, he became Cardinal-Bishop of Frascati. He died in 1807. He is credited in Jesuit history with enmity towards the Society. The Spanish Ambassador, Floridablanca, an active agent in the Suppression, will appear later in Carroll's life, when St. Peter's Church, in New York City, is founded (1785). The Palafox cause referred to was the process introduced in 1726 for the beatification of Juan de Palafox y Mendoza (d. 1659), Bishop of Puebla de los Angeles, Mexico, whose episcopate was tarnished with an acrimonious attack upon the Jesuits. The cause was strongly promoted by the enemies of the Society, during the pontificates of Benedict XIV, Clement XIII, Clement XIV, and Pius VI.

*My dear Fr.,*

Mr. More has probably left Liège by this time, and I shall expect to hear from you the alterations his visit may have caused amongst you,

as well as your final determination concerning your visit to England. It is a long time since I have heard anything concerning my good Fr. Mercer, and sincerely wish to be informed of his entire recovery. You will be pleased to inform the Rector that Mr. Stourton continues reacquiring his strength very prosperously. In one of my late letters to Fr. Howard, I explained my sentiments very freely on Neville's appointment to Philosophy, in the supposition of its not being a temporary measure, formed upon present necessity. But if it should not be exclusive of Barrow, I dare say no one will have much objection to it. I shall be glad to hear from you on this subject. Poor Austin's misfortune excited, I doubt not, in you the same sentiments of grief and compassion, which the reflection of so many hours spent amicably together raised in my mind. He is indeed an example, which cannot but raise fears in those, who lived with him in the course of his studies. Who can either depend on himself or others, when a person of so religious behaviour, & so tender conscience is come to so deplorable a condition?

Before this comes to your hands, Fr. Hothersall will have informed you how far he has been affected by the late operations at Rome: however I will venture to repeat what we heard by yesterday's post. The Chancellor & Vicar of Card'l York, Bishop of Frascati by Supreme order, as they signified, visited a few days ago three houses of the Jesuits in order to search for printing presses, which were suspected to be there. The houses were Monte Portio of the English College, Rufanella of the Roman, & ye residence of Frascati. In the last two nothing was found, on which a suspicion could be fastened; but in the Rector's room at Monte Portio was discovered a paper with some lamp black on it, which is used to make blacking for shoes. I suppose this was construed to be materials for making ink, & in consequence was carried off & consigned to Card'l York, who, I suppose, is to present it to his holiness. Tho' the visitors said their search was for printing presses, yet they extended it to books etc, but with little success. They carried away from the R's room, besides the lamp-black, the offices of S. Pulcheria & Ven: Bede: & hearing the Curate of the parish had a copy of the Bourgfontaine project, they took that likewise away from him. The order for this visit was probably occasioned by some late printed sheets scattered about Rome, some on the Palafox cause, & others on the scandalous decision of Fr. Pisani's affair. In particular the judge Alfani has been deeply wounded by a series of anecdotes, which have been published of him. The paper is badly written, but is wholly founded on truth, & exposes the Judge to the contempt or rather to the execration of the publick.

Another thing has happened at Rome, which gives much uneasiness, & is probably the effect of some malicious enemy, for surely no friend could be so indiscreet, as to be the author of it. A letter was lately received by all, or at least by several Card'ls in which they are told, that the Spanish Ambassador is to come with peremptory demands for the aboli-



tion of the Society, & that his demands are to be accompanied with threats: that there is no vigour in the present government or resolution to make a proper answer, as temporal considerations prevail so much over ye spiritual welfare of the church, which the writer endeavours to shew by many late facts: wherefore he advises the Card'ls to consult on the means for hindering the mischief which may ensue.

The affair of the Roman Seminary still remains in suspense. It is said that the Card'ls Vicar Colonna & Marefoschi are to hold a conference on the subject. The former is resolute in his opinion that nothing be determined, without hearing the Seminary justify its conduct. Water-ton is still at Rome. Has Fr. Stuart had another touch of the gout? Does he follow Dr. Cadogan's rules of drinking water, & eating only one thing? Could he abide by this regime during the Pentecost villa? Should one Fr. Pellegrini of this province pass by Liège, I hope the Rr. will shew him great civility. He is an eminent preacher, & a very fine writer. I know him only by reputation, & he is now travelling thro Germany & the Low Countries, attended by his Br. Count Pellegrini, a Gen'l in the Queen's Service. Compl'ts.

J. CARROLL.

It seems obvious that a priest and Jesuit, even in those trying times for the Society, and the guardian of a young English Catholic nobleman of prominence, must have given a good part of the six months they spent in Rome to social calls. The Venerable English College would attract such visitors; and there was the Cardinal Duke of York living a few miles beyond the city at Frascati, and no doubt a thorough search would reveal a number of English, and even American, residents at Rome during that winter, with whom they met and conversed.<sup>17</sup> But the only tradition which remains of his visit is the sad certainty Carroll felt that the total suppression of the Society was a foregone conclusion.

Had he but known the truth, the decree *Dominus ac Redemptor* was even then being prepared. It was signed three months after his departure from Rome, by Pope Clement XIV, on July 21, 1773, and was being promulgated by the time he had again settled down to his work in the English Jesuit College at Bruges.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *The Diary of the English College at Rome* and the *Pilgrim Book* in FOLEY, *Records S. J.*, vol. vi, do not come down as far as 1772-1773. GASQUET, *History of the Venerable English College, Rome* (London, 1920), gives us no list of such visitors.

<sup>18</sup> BRENT (*op. cit.*, pp. 32-33) says: "While engaged in this tour he likewise wrote a succinct history of England, for the use of his pupil, in the form of a dialogue, principally to guard his young mind against the general irreligious tendency of soul, and the particularly hostile tendency of other writings, upon the same subject, against the Catholic faith."

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SUPPRESSION OF THE ENGLISH JESUIT PROVINCE

(1773)

The decree suppressing the Society of Jesus was issued on August 16, 1773, and was made known to the English Jesuits at Bruges, on September 5, of that year. Father Carroll's long absence from the college brought him into close touch with the animosity everywhere prevalent in Europe against the Society, and the outcome weighed heavily upon his heart. For the English-born among the Jesuits at Bruges, a refuge, paradoxical as it may seem, existed in England; and towards England they turned their eyes for help and safety in the trial which had come upon them. An attempt was made to have Father Carroll remain in Bruges as Prefect of the Sodality of that city, but "convinced that the Society of Jesus would be either annihilated or so restricted as to be unable to continue its work, he saw no avenue open in Europe where all seemed seething with destructive fires. Everything convinced him that the wisest course was to return to his native land."<sup>1</sup> On September 11, 1773, he wrote to his brother Daniel, from Bruges, informing him of what had occurred at the college and of his intention to return home:

I this day received a few lines from you, of July 15, in which you complain with much reason of my long silence. My mind is at present too full of other things to make any apology. After spending part of the autumn of 1772 at Naples, and its environs, we returned to pass the winter at Rome, where I stayed till near the end of March, from thence came to Florence, Genoa, Tunis, Lyons, Paris, and so to Liège and Bruges. I was willing to accept of the vacant post of prefect of the sodality here, after consigning Mr. Stourton into his father's hands about two months ago, that I might enjoy some retirement, and consider well in the presence of God the disposition I found myself in of going to join my relatives in Maryland, and in case that disposition continued, to get out next spring. But now all room for deliberation seems to be over.

<sup>1</sup> SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 38.

The enemies of the Society, and above all the unrelenting perseverance of the Spanish and Portuguese Ministries, with the passiveness of the court of Vienna, have at length obtained their ends: and our so long persecuted, and I must add, holy Society is no more. God's holy will be done, and may his name be blessed forever and ever! This fatal stroke was struck on the 21st of July, but was kept secret at Rome till the 16th of August, and was only made known to us on the 5th of September. I am not, and perhaps never shall be, recovered from the shock of this dreadful intelligence. The greatest blessing which in my estimation I could receive from God, would be immediate death; but if he deny me this, may his holy and adorable designs on me be wholly fulfilled. Is it possible that Divine Providence should permit to such an end, a body wholly devoted, and I will still aver, with the most disinterested charity, in procuring every comfort and advantage to their neighbours, whether by preaching, teaching, catechizing, missions, visiting hospitals, prisons, and every other function of spiritual and corporal mercy? Such I have beheld it in every part of my travels, the first of all ecclesiastical bodies in the esteem and confidence of the faithful, and certainly the most labourious. What will become of our flourishing congregations with you, and those cultivated by the German fathers [*in Pennsylvania*]? These reflections crowd so fast upon me that I almost lose my senses. But I will endeavour to suppress them for a few moments. You see that I am now my own master, and left to my own direction. In returning to Maryland I shall have the comfort of not only being with you, but of being farther out of the reach of scandal and defamation, and removed from the scenes of distress of many of my dearest friends, whom God knows, I shall not be able to relieve. I shall therefore most certainly sail for Maryland early next spring, if I possibly can.<sup>2</sup>

It has often been remarked that the hostility in France towards the Society of Jesus was of a different character to that of Portugal and Spain, where the design for the total extinction of the Jesuits was born. In France, it was a group of influential personages both within and outside court circles that had decided upon the Suppression. This firm and impious alliance, as Theiner calls it in his *History of the Pontificate of Clement XIV*, had not forgotten the Jesuit opposition to Jansenism in the reign of Louis XIV. "The Jansenists and the magistrates were burning to retaliate on the Society in every way in their power, and, if they did not first think of working for its entire destruction, it was only because they decided that to be a hopeless enterprise."<sup>3</sup> The successful campaign against the Society in

<sup>2</sup> BRENT, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-27.

<sup>3</sup> SMITH, *The Suppression of the Society of Jesus*, in the *Month*, vol. xcix, p. 268.

Portugal emboldened its enemies in France, where at the time the real ruler was a woman, the mistress of Louis XV, Madame de Pompadour, whose "reign" lasted from 1746 to 1764. The King had a Jesuit confessor, and although the royal penitent never approached the sacraments, the confessor was kept near in case of serious illness. Naturally, everyone knew that the confessor's first condition for absolution would be to send the mistress away. How far the personal antagonism thus created contributed to the fall of the Society in France will never be fully known, but it is clear from one of Father Carroll's letters that the death of the Pompadour (April 15, 1764) was regarded as a possible armistice:

The death of the famous Marchioness de Pompadour, will, it is generally believed by our French brethren, occasion some great change in their circumstances; so far is certain, that they are delivered by this event from their greatest enemy, I mean the most powerful one, and who, by her interest and influence over the king of France, could more easily than anyone else prevail upon him to view tamely the proceedings against the Jesuits, which she underhandedly encouraged by all the arts which cunning and power could put into her hands. The Jesuits ground their hopes upon the declared attachment of all the royal family to their interests, upon the intimate connection and intelligence subsisting between the king and his queen and children, since the great lady's death, upon the zealous intercessions of the bishops, all the prime nobility, and every order of magistrates in the different cities and towns where the Jesuits were heretofore established. If we add to this the general discontent that has ensued upon the appointment and conduct both in morals and literary pursuits of the newly installed masters for the education of youth, we cannot absolutely pronounce these hopes to have an object merely chimerical: but I will own to you that the irresolute behaviour which has appeared so much in the French government, on many late occasions, makes me apprehend that vigour will be wanting to bring about so desirable a revolution, as it is likely to meet with great opposition from several parliaments, whose principles are very incompatible with those the Jesuits would endeavour to maintain and propagate in case of their restoration. Thus you see the prospect before us gives but little cause to be content with this world, while past sufferings have served to strengthen, if possible, our belief in another better and more equitable than this. And indeed to a man lying under the public imputation of crimes, for which his own conscience clears him, and who is persuaded of the existence of a Deity, I know no proof of an immortality more sensible and comfortable, than this reflection, that an all powerful and infinitely just Being cannot consistently with these attributes, refuse him in another

life that justice, which passion and iniquity have denied him in this. To pretend, as some ancient and modern unbelievers have done, that virtue and a good conscience is its own reward, argues very little knowledge of the human heart, for many a hardy villain, from a natural alacrity and cheerfulness of mind, and possessed of worldly enjoyments, seldom finds, at least for any long time, his remorse to prey much upon him, or disturb his pleasures, whilst several good men on the contrary, from an unhappy temper or sickly constitution, but rarely feel any even intellectual enjoyments. I cannot otherwise account for my having fallen into this train of philosophising which I hope you will excuse, than because I have habituated myself to it, as the best relief amidst so many affecting and melancholy scenes.<sup>4</sup>

But the Bourbon "Family Compact"<sup>5</sup> wreaked its vengeance to the end. The Suppression in Portugal (1758) was followed by that in Spain (1767). After the death of Pope Clement XIII (February 2, 1769), it was openly asserted by the enemies of the Jesuits that Ganganeli was elected as Clement XIV on the express stipulation that he would make the Suppression universal.

When we compare together the three first suppressions of the Society by civil authority during the pontificate of Clement XIII, we cannot but observe that each had its own peculiar physiognomy. In France there was at all events a trial in a court of justice to investigate the charges brought against the Jesuits—though it was an investigation carried on in defiance of, rather than in compliance with, the rules of equity. In Portugal there was no trial, at least no trial of which the proceedings were published, but at all events, there was a public statement of the offenses charged. In Spain, on the other hand, the Jesuits were not even permitted to know what was the crime for their supposed commission of which they were visited with a punishment more drastic than that which befel them in either France or Portugal. They were merely told that the King reserved the secret within his royal breast.<sup>6</sup>

In one of Father Carroll's letters to his brother Daniel, about this time, we find a reaction to the popular rumours about the attitude of Cardinal Ganganeli (Pope Clement XIV):

Before you receive this letter you will have heard of the Pope's [*Clement XIII*] death: in human appearance, nothing could have hap-

<sup>4</sup> BRENT, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>5</sup> The "Family Compact" was a secret agreement said to have been made on August 15, 1761, between the rulers of France and Spain who afterwards admitted into their designs the sovereigns of Naples and Parma. By the Compact these Bourbon princes formed an offensive and defensive alliance for their mutual protection.

<sup>6</sup> SMITH, as in note 3, vol. xcix, p. 626.



pened more unfortunate to us, especially in the critical moment when an answer was to have been given to the memorials of three united courts of the family compact, France, Spain, and Naples, requiring the immediate dissolution of the society. His Holiness had himself minuted the heads of the answer he intended to make in a few days and had delivered it to his ministers to be put into the due form. The substance of it was, that no worldly consideration, no loss of temporalities, should ever force him into any measure which he could not justify to his own conscience: that the more he saw and knew of the Jesuits, the more he was convinced of their eminent services to religion, and of the falsehood of the imputations charged upon them: that he could not therefore acquiesce in the proposal made him by the allied courts. The answer entered into a much larger detail than I here mention, and would have been a glorious testimony of his Holiness's esteem and affection for the society. How matters will go on in the conclave, and after the election of the new Pope, Heaven knows. Humanly speaking, we have everything to dread from the combination formed against us; yet when I reflect on the atrocious falsehoods, injustices, cruelties, and mean artifices employed against us, I greatly confide that God's providence will not permit our dissolution to be effected by such wicked means. I know his kingdom is not of this world, and that they who seek to do his divine will, and promote his glory, are not to expect a visible interposition in their favour on every occasion, or to receive in this life an apparent testimony of innocence and divine approbation.<sup>7</sup>

The Brief *Dominus ac Redemptor* (August 16, 1773) is one of the unfairest pontifical acts in the history of the papacy. It has two main divisions. The first states the thesis that it is the pope's office to secure unity of mind in the bonds of peace within the Church and that the Supreme Head of the Church must be ready to destroy institutions that are very dear to him, no matter what loss such destruction may entail, in order to preserve the peace of Christendom. Then follows a series of charges made against the Society of Jesus from its foundation: its domestic dissensions and jealousies; its quarrels with other religious Orders; the conflicts it had engendered with the secular clergy and with the universities; and especially its opposition to certain kings and princes. After long and prayerful consideration, Clement XIV had finally decided to yield to the wishes of "our beloved sons in Jesus Christ, the Kings of France, Spain, Portugal, and the Two Sicilies"; he was compelled by his office, which imposed on him the obligation to maintain and consolidate peace

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<sup>7</sup> BRENT, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-29.



in Europe, to suppress and abolish the Society. The second part of the document contains the actual Decree of Suppression, with the prescriptions regulating the abolition of the Society. "All the scholastics were to leave its houses within the space of a year, and being freed from the simple vows they had taken, might on leaving embrace any mode of life to which they felt called; all in priest's orders must enter another religious Order or place themselves as secular priests under the jurisdiction of the Bishop where they might reside, their maintenance being secured to them from the revenues of the house to which they were attached at the time of the Suppression."<sup>8</sup>

On August 18, 1773, Cardinal Corsini, in the name of the special commission appointed to carry out the edict, despatched an encyclical letter to all the bishops of the world, authorizing them to publish the *Dominus ac Redemptor* in their dioceses and to carry out its provisions. A copy of the Brief was to be sent to each Jesuit house and an Act of Submission was to be inclosed to which every member of the Society was required to append his signature.

The death of Clement XIV on September 23, 1774, brought to the Chair of Peter a remarkable pope in Pius VI (1775-1799) who had made no secret of his disapproval of the treatment accorded to the Jesuits in certain countries. To the everlasting credit of the English hierarchy it can be said that the Suppression in England was carried out in a humane manner and without any of those refinements of cruelty which, for example, have tarnished the reputation of Spanish ecclesiastics for equity and courtesy.

There were at his time in the English Province 274 Jesuits, of whom 139 were actually in England.<sup>9</sup> This would leave 135 to be accounted for in the various colleges on the Continent and in the Maryland-Pennsylvania mission. The first place where the blow fell was upon the English College, Rome, which had been under the direction of the English Jesuits, from the time of Robert Persons.<sup>10</sup> And from Rome the car of destruction moved until it had crushed all the institutions under the Society's control.

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<sup>8</sup> SMITH, *ut supra*, vol. ci, pp. 501-502.

<sup>9</sup> FOLEY, *Records S. J.*, vol. xii, p. 214. Cf. BURTON, *Life and Times of Bishop Challoner*, vol. ii, p. 162, note.

<sup>10</sup> GASQUET, *History of the Venerable English College, Rome*, p. 177. London, 1920.

Propaganda, it is true, had sent out instructions to all the bishops within its jurisdiction ordering that a copy of the Brief of Suppression should be sent to each Jesuit for his formal acceptance; but such a measure was highly imprudent in a land like England where the publication of papal decrees was unlawful. So far as England was concerned it was comparatively easy to communicate verbally the news to the Jesuits, and this Bishop Challoner proceeded to do, at the same time requiring each Jesuit to sign an acknowledgment of the non-existence of the Society. Since this solution could not apply to the ex-Jesuits in America, Bishop Challoner reached them by letter, addressed to the Superior, Father Lewis, in October, 1773. "The wise and prudent counsels of the Vicars-apostolic," writes Burton, "carried out with paternal sympathy for those who thus unexpectedly became their immediate subjects, made it easier for the English Jesuits to maintain their dignified and edifying attitude of absolute submission."<sup>11</sup>

On the evening of October 14, 1773, the Austrian commissioners forced their way into the college at Bruges and arrested Fathers Angier, Plowden, and Carroll. Father Charles Plowden was then minister of the larger college, and his *Account of the Destruction of the English Colleges at Bruges in 1773*, written in 1807, gives us the details of this second calamity in which Carroll figures.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately for his biographers, as has already been noted, all Carroll's private papers and his correspondence with his mother and kindred at home were confiscated at this time, and have never since been discovered. With Father Carroll at Bruges was another American Jesuit, Father Nicholas Sewall, who never returned to Maryland, and who became provincial of the restored Society in England, in 1821.<sup>13</sup>

Exile again faced the masters and pupils. In spite of the intervention of Lord Arundell of Wardour, who was a Count of the Holy Roman Empire, there was no hope of redress, and a second migration took place, this time to the English College at Liège, where the secularized English Jesuits had set up a college. The Liège Academy lasted down to 1794, when a third migration

<sup>11</sup> BURTON, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 168.

<sup>12</sup> The original MSS. are in the Stonyhurst Archives, and excerpts are printed in FOLEY, *Records S. J.*, vol. v, pp. 173-183. SHEA (*op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 35, 43), erroneously credits this account to Carroll.

<sup>13</sup> HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Text, vol. ii, p. 704.

occurred to the present site of the college, Stonyhurst in Lancashire, England.<sup>14</sup> Father Charles Plowden went on to Liège, but Father Carroll accompanied the other masters and the boys who had to return home, to England, where he acted as secretary for the committee which drew up a series of remonstrances to the Austrian Government over the loss of the property at Bruges.<sup>15</sup>

The Suppression was one of the last acts in a drama that had lasted since 1580—the conflict between the religious and secular clergy in England. Catholic England “beyond the seas,” as the chain of continental colleges was known, was as important a battleground as London; and with the Society condemned and suppressed by the Church, it required consummate tact on the part of the English Catholic leaders to save the Church from a recrudescence of the old bitterness.<sup>16</sup> “The larger question,” writes Burton, “as to the treatment of the ex-Jesuits and the application of their property was one of vital importance to English Catholics, and called for the wisest handling. Fortunately, at this difficult crisis, every one concerned behaved with the greatest restraint and self-control. The Fathers of the Society submitted to the Pope’s decree with an obedience that is ever praiseworthy, especially when it is remembered what a sacrifice on their part was involved. Unable to foresee the restoration

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<sup>14</sup> Father John Hungerford Pollen, S.J., regrets “that we have not a special study of the three migrations, first from St. Omer to Bruges, then on to Liège, then to Stonyhurst. Taken together these journeys (1762-1794), form a unique page in the annals of school history, honorable in the highest possible degree both to staff and scholars.” Cf. *Month*, May, 1910. The list of American boys educated at the Liège Academy is a goodly one (Cf. *Publications of the Catholic Record Society*, vol. xiii, pp. 202-214—*Boys at Liège Academy 1773-1791*). Some years ago I went through the Archives of the Jesuit house of studies at Liège, but found nothing for my purpose, except manuscripts of philosophical and theological notes. The Library of the University of Liège also failed to reveal any American data.

<sup>15</sup> It would be interesting to know when the two colleges at Bruges were put in charge of the English Dominicans of Bornheim, whether any of the American Dominicans, such as Father Fenwick, were sent there. Cf. GUILDAY, *op. cit.*, p. 411; ROBINSON, *Notice sur les Collèges des Pères Jésuites Anglais à Bruges*. Bruges, 1884, pp. 24-28; OLIVER, *Collections, etc.*, London, 1857, p. 484; VAN DONINCK, *Het voormalig Engelsch Klooster te Bornheim* (Louvain, 1904); and O’DANIEL, *Life of Bishop Fenwick* (Washington, 1921), do not give us this information.

<sup>16</sup> The earlier period of the conflict has been told with admirable objectiveness by Father John Pollen in his *Institution of the Archpriest Blackwell* (London, 1916), and the Ward-Burton series carry the story down to the restoration of the English Hierarchy in 1850; the final chapters will be found in SNEAD-COX, *Life of Cardinal Vaughan* (London, 1912, 2 vols.).

of the Society forty years later, they were face to face with the complete ruin of the institution to which they had devoted their lives."<sup>17</sup>

Bishop Challoner's announcement to the American Jesuits was as follows:

*London, October 6, 1773.*

*To Messrs. the Missioners in Maryland and Pennsylvania:*

To obey the orders I have received from above, I notify to you by this the Breve of the total dissolution of the Society of Jesus; and send withal a form of declaration of your obedience and submission, to which you are to subscribe, as your brethren have done here; and send me back the formula with the subscriptions of you all, as I am to send them up to Rome.

*Ever yours,*

RICHARD DEBOREN, *V. Ap.*

The form which they were required to subscribe to was as follows:

Infrascripti Congregationis Clericorum regularium Societatis Jesu dudum nuncupati presbyteri in Districtu Londienensi Marylandiæ et Pennsylvania missionarii, facta nobis declaratione et publicatione Brevis Apostolici a Ssmo. Dno. nostro Clem. PP. XIV editi die 21 Julii 1773 quo prædictam Congregationem et Societatem penitus supprimit et extinguit toto orbi terrarum; jubetque illius instituti Presbyteros tanquam Sacerdotes sæculares, Episcoporum regimini et auctoritate omnino subjectos esse, nos supradicti brevi plene et sincere obtemperantes et omnimodo dictæ Societatis suppressioni humiliter acquiescentes supramemorati Episcopi Vicarii apostolici, tanquam presbyteri sæculares jurisdictioni et regimini nos omnino subijcimus.<sup>18</sup>

Cardinal Castelli, Prefect of Propaganda, in a letter to Bishop Challoner, August 25, 1773, conceded the privilege to the ex-Jesuits of remaining in the places where they were, if they submitted fully and sincerely. The Maryland-Pennsylvania mission was unique at that time, since all the missionaries were members of the suppressed Society; they were therefore necessary to the continuance of Catholic life in the American colonies. It is interesting, therefore, to watch the good bishop's quiet ignoring of the order he had received to the effect that provisional posses-

<sup>17</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 164-165.

<sup>18</sup> SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 77; HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, pp. 608-609.

sion should at once be taken of all the property, goods, and appurtenances belonging to the Society. "What am I going to do with those who are in America," he writes to his Roman agent, Monsignor Stonor, "living as they are in another world, without bishop or even a priest who is not a Jesuit?"<sup>19</sup> In the end, fortunately, nothing was done, but it was a long time before the American ex-Jesuits recovered from their fear of confiscation on the part of the Sacred Congregation. The shadow of Propaganda's hand was seen for many a year across the Atlantic, and this especially must be remembered when the question of a bishopric for the United States arises. Episcopal authority could mean only one thing to the beaten remnants of the Jesuit Society—confiscation of all they possessed, and with confiscation the fall of the missions and the end of their own maintenance.

The Act of Submission sent to America was signed by twenty-one members of the suppressed Society<sup>20</sup> and was then returned to Dr. Challoner by Father John Lewis, the superior of the Society in the colonies. Two years later Propaganda acknowledged to Challoner the receipt of this document, in a letter of thanks for the "punctuality and attention" shown by the London Vicar-Apostolic in the matter. There were at Liège at the time of the Suppression the following American Jesuits: Father Joseph Semmes, who died at Stonyhurst in 1809; Father John Boarman, who came to Maryland in March, 1774; Father Charles Sewall, who arrived in Maryland in May, 1774; Father Augustine Jenkins, who accompanied Father Sewall; Father Charles Wharton, who went to England in 1775, and later apostatized; Father Leonard Neale, who went to the missions in Demarara. There were also two scholastics at Liège: Charles Boarman, who came to Maryland in 1773 and became a professor at Georgetown College, and who later married, and Ignatius Baker Brooke, who was ordained priest by Bishop Carroll, in 1809.<sup>21</sup>

The superiors of the American part of the old English prov-

<sup>19</sup> HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, p. 604.

<sup>20</sup> The fac-simile of the Act can be seen in HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Doc., vol. i, part ii, opposite p. 607. Another list in the Westminster Archives contains sixteen names. The original document, containing twenty-one names, was sent by Challoner to Propaganda (*Propaganda Archives*, 1774, *Missioni-Misc.*, vol. v, f. 113).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *Records*, vol. xix, pp. 231-233.



ince during the hundred and fifty years of the Jesuit Mission, as given by Foley (*Collectanea*, part I, 73ss), were as follows:

Father White, Andrew	1633
Brooke or Brock, John	1639
White, Andrew	1642
Fisher, Philip	1643
Hartwell, Bernard	1644
Fisher, Philip	1648
Fitzherbert, Francis	1659
Pelham (Warren) Henry	1664
Forster, Michael	1676
Pennington, Francis	1684
Harvey, Thomas	1686
Hunter, William	1696
Brooke, Robert	1709
Mansell, Thomas	1714
Thorold, George	1725
Atwood, Peter	1734
Molyneux, Richard	1735
Greaton, Joseph	1740
Poulton, Thomas	1743
Molyneux, Richard	1749
Digges, Thomas	1750
Digges, Thomas	1753
Hunter, George	1756
Lewis, John	1768-1773

Living in London, the contents of Challoner's letter to the American Fathers were no doubt known to Father John Carroll, and it must have had some effect upon his decision to return home. His situation was precarious. He had renounced all claim to his father's estate in 1762, and there was no surety that he would be given an income from the property of the suppressed Society in America. About this time he accepted an invitation from Lord Arundell to make his home at Wardour Castle, acting as chaplain to the family and to the Catholics of the neighbourhood. Henry, the eighth Lord of Arundell, entered St. Omer's College in 1753, and was probably Carroll's classmate. He died in 1808.<sup>22</sup> "This elegant leisure was not able to detain the good priest. He felt that his real mission was in his own land;

<sup>22</sup> Cf. OLIVER, *Collections, etc.*, pp. 87-88; FOLEY, *Records S. J.*, vol. v, pp. 182-183; BURKE, *Peerage*, pp. 42-43.



though how Providence was to employ him there he could not foresee. His affectionate heart prompted him to return to his aged mother, and he felt that he must act at once."<sup>23</sup> Several courses were open to him: he might have remained, as did many of the professors of the suppressed colleges in England, as a chaplain to a Catholic family or to a district, or he might have gone back to the Academy of Liège as one of the *English gentlemen*, and no doubt influence was brought to bear on him to do so. But once his decision to return to America was made, he did not waver.

Father John Carroll was in his fortieth year when he set sail from England in the late spring of 1774. He had left home a boy of thirteen and was returning "a care-worn man of forty, destitute of fortune and disappointed in the hopes he had formed for the triumphs of religion, to be achieved by the Society to which he had pledged his faith forever. Its banner had been struck down, but the glorious motto, *Ad majorem Dei gloriam*, was inscribed upon his heart; and while he bowed in submission to the decree of Heaven, he sought to make himself useful as a priest in the station to which God had called him."<sup>24</sup>

There is no doubt that the home ties were felt intensely by all the Americans abroad at this time, but another factor must not be forgotten in judging his return to Maryland. The letters which are extant between the parents at home and the American boys abroad are filled with the political news of the day, and John Carroll's correspondence from home, which is now lost to us through the confiscation at Bruges and by other unforeseen circumstances, must have contained its share of warnings that a state of rebellion towards England in the American colonies was festering ever since the close of the French and Indian War. A careful perusal of the correspondence between Charles Carroll and his son, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, reveals a constant and uniform indoctrination of American principles. "You know ye old proverb," wrote Charles Carroll of Carrollton after his return to Maryland, "—nothing so dangerous as to provoke a person able to revenge ye provocation. If England forces her

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<sup>23</sup> SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 43-44.

<sup>24</sup> B. U. CAMPBELL, in the *United States Catholic Magazine*, vol. iii (1844), p. 36.

colonies to rebellion . . ."<sup>25</sup> Pamphlets—it was the era of political pamphleteers—were sent from both sides of the Atlantic.

The English colonies were vocal with rebellion when John Carroll arrived at Richland, Va., the homestead of his brother-in-law, William Brent.<sup>26</sup> Lord North's coercive policy had resulted in the so-called Intolerable Acts. The port of Boston was closed on June 1, 1774, and after July 1, 1774, the people of Massachusetts were deprived of their chartered rights. The Administration of Justice Act, and the Quartering Act of June 2, 1774, unified the spirit of the colonies, and in September of that year the Revolution was born at the First Continental Congress at Philadelphia.

The vessel on which John Carroll came, accompanied by Father Anthony Carroll,<sup>27</sup> a native of Ireland, who returned to England in 1775, was one of the last to leave for America before the Revolution. At Richland, Father Carroll met his two sisters, Ellen and Ann. His long absence of about twenty-seven years had brought many changes in the family circle. His elder brother, Daniel of Rock Creek, had married Eleanor Carroll, daughter of Daniel Carroll and Ann Rozier, and cousin of Charles Carroll of Carrollton. Ann, his elder sister, had married Robert Brent, of Woodstock, Aquia, Va., who had been John's classmate at Bohemia and at St. Omer's; Eleanor, the next youngest to John, had married William Brent of Richland, Va. Father John Carroll spent two days at Richland, surrounded by the families of his sisters, and then proceeded to Rock Creek, where his mother had settled. "In a heart like that of John Carroll," says Brent, "such a scene was peculiarly calculated to awaken the kindest emotions. In no period of his existence abroad did distance ever sever him in affection, nor avocation or society withdraw him, from a correspondence with his family in this country."<sup>28</sup>

The political situation of the English colonies had been grow-

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<sup>25</sup> *Monograph Series*, United States Catholic Historical Society, no. i, p. 149; cf. *Researches*, vol. iv, p. 190; vol. v, p. 99; vol. xix, p. 39.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. EDDIS, *Letters from America, etc.*, pp. 156-188. London, 1792. From Annapolis, on May 25, 1774, Eddis writes: "All America is in a flame! I hear strange language every day" (*Ibid.*, p. 158).

<sup>27</sup> FOLEY, *Records S. J.*, vol. vii, part i, pp. 117-118.

<sup>28</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 36. Cf. *Researches*, vol. xii, p. 53; vol. xiii, p. 73.

ing intensely during the decade preceding Father Carroll's return. The public prints of London had kept up a running commentary on the opposition to English rule in the colonies, and the debates in Parliament brought the revolutionary spirit which was alive in America home to the heart of the Empire. During his year of residence in England, John Carroll had excellent opportunities to gauge public opinion, and he returned fully equipped to take part in the movement. There was no question of his patriotism, for he was the first priest of the rebellious colonies to refuse obedience to the last of the superiors, Father John Lewis, who acted all through the war as Vicar-General of the London District. This was not in a spirit of insubordination, but with political cleavage from England, John Carroll believed ecclesiastical separation went also. He declined to conform to the English jurisdiction of Father Lewis and chose to reside independently with his mother at Rock Creek. As a result Father Lewis informed him that he would not be entitled to any share in the revenues from the ex-Jesuit estates. "Because I live with my mother, for whose sake alone I sacrificed the very best place in England, and told Mr. Lewis I did not choose to be subject to be moved from place to place, now that we had no longer the vow of obedience to entitle us to the merit of it, he does not choose to bear any part of my expense. I do not mention this by way of complaint, as I am perfectly easy at present."<sup>29</sup>

He returned an amiable, cultured, and polished man, endowed with all the acquirements of the learning of the day. He left England at a time when unrest sat high in political and ecclesiastical circles, and he was not to find the land of his birth in a peaceful condition. A long and successful career in the American vineyard lay before him, and events were so to shape themselves within the next decade that upon him and upon his judgment would rest the very difficult problem of organizing the distracted Church in the United States into a compact, learned and thoroughly patriotic body of clergy and laity. With the Suppression of the Society, the old order of things had changed, and how well he succeeded is now known to all who are familiar with the beginnings of the American Republic.

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<sup>29</sup> Carroll to Plowden, in *Woodstock Letters*, vol. xxiv, p. 128.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE ENGLISH COLONIES ON THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION

(1774)

The year of John Carroll's return (1774) was an important one in the history of the Church in this country. It marked the end of the canonical system of jurisdiction by which the clergy and laity were governed in the English colonies from the founding of Maryland in 1634. It marked also the year of one of the most interesting stages in the history of English religious intolerance, namely, the passage by Parliament of the famous Quebec Act, both of which events were far-reaching in their effect upon the Catholic body in the colonies.

It would be very helpful to us in attempting to describe the political, social, and religious condition of the Church in the colonies at this time, if we had the exact number of priests, people, churches, and chapels, together with their location in the thirteen provinces, upon which to base such a description. The inhabitants of the thirteen colonies were unevenly distributed. A rough estimate places the entire population at three million, and an equally rough estimate claims a Catholic population of about twenty-two thousand. Harper's *Atlas of American History*<sup>1</sup> gives the total population in 1770 as 2,205,000. The greatest number, 450,000, is accredited to Virginia (and Kentucky), with 309,000 in Massachusetts, 250,000 in Pennsylvania, 200,000 in Maryland and 20,000 in Delaware. The largest cities were Philadelphia (28,000), New York (21,000), Boston (15,520) Charleston (10,000) and Baltimore (5000).

The geographical location of the Catholics in the English colonies can be ascertained, though not with absolute accuracy, from contemporary sources which are still extant. In Maryland, the

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<sup>1</sup> New York, 1920.

Catholics were mostly of English and Irish origin; in Pennsylvania there were Irish, Scottish, French and German Catholics, with the Germans predominating. New York and New Jersey had but few members of the Faith at that time, and in the other colonies the Catholics existed as individuals lost in the general body of the population.<sup>2</sup> All along the coast were the scattered remnants of the exiled Acadians.<sup>3</sup> West of the Proclamation Line, were French Catholic settlements at Detroit, Green Bay, Prairie du Chien, Peoria, Cahokia, Chartres, Kaskaskia, Vincennes, Natchez, New Orleans and Mobile.<sup>4</sup> There was practically no correspondence between these Catholics and those along the Atlantic coast. Even in 1785, John Carroll was obliged to report to Rome that he was unable to learn anything of these members of the Church living in the Mississippi Valley. Florida had been divided in 1763 into two provinces, East and West Florida; and during the twenty years of British rule in that colony (1763-1783), the Spanish Catholics who had remained, and the Minorcans who had accompanied Dr. Turnbull to New Smyrna, were experiencing the effects of Protestant intolerance.<sup>5</sup>

For the state of the Church in the thirteen original colonies, namely, in that part of the English domain in America, east of the Mississippi and Ohio Valleys and north of East and West Florida, we have scanty records, but being few they are all the more precious. The first of these, though not first in point of

<sup>2</sup> *The Catholic Church in the United States (1776-1876)*, in the *Catholic World*, vol. xxiii (1876), pp. 488-499.

<sup>3</sup> RICHARD, *Acadia: Missing Links of a Lost Chapter in American History*, New York, 1885. Cf. *Acadia: Reconstitution d'un chapitre perdu de l'histoire de l'Amérique*; par Henri D'Arles, vol. iii, *Appendice xi (La Déportation des Acadiens)*, pp. 503ss. Quebec, 1921.

<sup>4</sup> FINLEY, *The French in the Heart of America*, pp. 216ss. New York, 1910. A good map of French settlements in old Louisiana will be found in THWAITES, *France in America*, p. 36. New York, 1905.

<sup>5</sup> DOGGETT, *Dr. Andrew Turnbull and the New Smyrna Colony of Florida*, pp. 96-108. Jacksonville, 1919. SHEA (*op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 90-92), says: "In direct violation of the treaty the Catholic inhabitants were at once subjected to vexations; the Bishop's house was seized for the use of the Church of England; the Franciscan convent, inasmuch as it had the best well of water in the place, was seized for the use of the British troops, and extensive barracks were erected on the old foundations, with lumber imported from New York. A general system of destruction was inaugurated. Of the suburbs of St. Augustine no trace was soon left, except the Church in the Indian town to the north of the city, which the English converted into a hospital. The steeple of the Franciscan Church stood like a monument of the sacrilegious work, and the parish Church was soon little more than a heap of ruins."



time, is the account of the state of Catholicism, said to have been written by Bishop Carroll in 1790, and published in the *Metropolitan* for 1830, by the Rev. C. C. Pise, who translated it from a French version.<sup>6</sup> Shea gives us the following excerpts from Bishop Carroll's manuscript:

Attempts were frequently made to introduce the whole code of penal English laws, and it seemed to depend more on the temper of the courts of justice than on avowed and acknowledged principles that these laws were not generally executed as they were sometimes partially. Under these discouraging circumstances Catholic families of note left their church and carried an accession of weight and influence into the Protestant cause. The seat of government was removed from St. Mary's where the Catholics were powerful, to Annapolis, where lay the strength of the opposite party. The Catholics, excluded from all lucrative employments, harassed and discouraged, became, in general, poor and dejected.

But in spite of their discouragements their numbers increased with the increase of population. They either had clergymen residing in their neighborhoods or were occasionally visited by them; but these congregations were dispersed at such distances, and the clergymen were so few that many Catholic families could not always hear Mass, or receive any instruction so often as once in a month. Domestic instruction supplied, in some degree, this defect; but very imperfectly. Amongst the poorer sort, many could not read, or if they could, were destitute of books, which, if to be had at all, must come from England; and in England the laws were excessively rigid against printing or vending Catholic books. Under all these difficulties, it is surprising that there remained in Maryland, even so much as there was, of true religion. In general, Catholics were regular and inoffensive in their conduct; such, I mean, as were natives of the country; but when many began to be imported, as servants, from Ireland, great licentiousness prevailed amongst them in the towns and neighborhoods where they were stationed, and spread a scandal injurious to true faith. Contiguous to the houses where the priests resided on the lands, which had been secured for the clergy, small chapels were built; but scarcely anywhere else; when divine service was performed at a distance from their residence, private and inconvenient houses were used for Churches. Catholics contributed nothing to the support of religion or its ministers; the whole charge of their maintenance, of furnishing the altars, of all travelling expenses, fell on the priests themselves, and

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<sup>6</sup> *Metropolitan; or Catholic Monthly Magazine*, vol. i (1830), pp. 90-93, 152-155. The translator says: "The following interesting particulars, relating to the establishment of the Catholic Religion in the United States, are selected from an old French MSS. preserved in the library of the Archbishop of Baltimore. From certain passages, I am inclined to believe, that it was originally written in English by Archbishop Carroll, and translated into the language in which I find it" (*Ibid.*, p. 90). This French document is missing in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*.



no compensation was ever offered for any service performed by them, nor did they require any, so long as the produce of their lands was sufficient to answer their demands. But it must have been foreseen that if religion should make considerable progress, this could not always be the case.<sup>7</sup>

The emphatic stress of this source is to the effect that on many occasions attempts were made to introduce the whole code of English anti-Catholic legislation in the colonies, and that only the mercy of particular judges saved Catholics from receiving the full penalty of the law on account of their faith. Even in Maryland, apostasies were not infrequent as a result, and the Catholics, ostracized from all public offices and places of employment, were in a dejected and despised condition. Their numbers, however, kept pace with the increase of the population, and they were never wholly destitute of religious aid. There were few Catholics who could not hear Mass at least three or four times a year. What was true for Maryland was no doubt true for the other colonies, and a surprising thing it is, that they remained loyal to the Faith in spite of so much opposition and discouragement. The second of these sources is an *Account of the Condition of the Catholic Religion in the English Colonies of America*, sent by Bishop Challoner to Rev. Dr. Stonor, the English clergy agent at Rome, written some time after 1763.<sup>8</sup> Those sections of the document referring to the English colonies are as follows:

Now, coming to the rich and populous provinces of *New England* and of *New York* one may find a Catholic here and there, but they have no opportunity of practicing their religion as no priest visits them, and if we are to judge of the future from the present conditions of the inhabitants, there is not much likelihood that Catholic priests will be permitted to enter these provinces, for the reason that the majority of the inhabitants are strict Presbyterians, or belong to other sects which are likewise most bitterly opposed to Catholicism.

Among the old possessions of Great Britain on the continent of *America*, the only colonies in which priests are permanently located are the provinces of *Maryland* and *Pennsylvania*. In the latter, the Catholic Religion is formally tolerated by law. In *Maryland*, the laws are opposed to it, as

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 48-49.

<sup>8</sup> SHEA, (*Ibid.*, pp. 11-12), cites part of this document. It is printed for the first time in Italian and English in the *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. vi, pp. 517-524, from the *Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, fols. 288-293, and bears the title *Ragguaglio dello Stato della Religione Cattolica nelle Colonie inglesi d'America*.

in England; however, these laws are rarely put into execution and usually there is a sort of tacit toleration.

It is claimed in *Maryland* there must be around sixteen thousand Catholics, of whom about half approach the sacraments. To take care of these there are twelve missionaries of the Society of Jesus.

The number of Catholics in Pennsylvania is between six and seven thousand. They have a public church at Philadelphia which is the capital of the province. They are ministered to by four priests, likewise Jesuits. These religious manifest great zeal and lead edifying lives.

There are besides some Catholics in *Virginia*, on the confines of *Maryland*, and in those parts of *New Jersey* which border on Pennsylvania. But they have no priests permanently residing among them, their spiritual wants being ministered to by missionaries from the two provinces above mentioned. As to *Carolina* and *Georgia*, it is impossible to say whether there are any Catholics there or not. One thing is certain, there are no priests in those provinces.

*Florida*, a province ceded by Spain in the same Treaty of Paris, already mentioned, is almost a wilderness, but the few Catholics who have remained there are allowed the freedom of practicing the Catholic Religion in the same manner as the inhabitants of Canada.

*Louisiana*, or the Province of *Mississippi*, which formerly belonged to the French, has for the most part been ceded to the English by the same treaty, that is, up to the *Mississippi* River, which gives the province its name. The same freedom of worship has been granted in favor of the Catholic inhabitants, of whom there must be a considerable number. But as to how they are taken care of spiritually the writer has no information whatsoever.

The Vicars-Apostolic of London since the time of King James II have always had authority over the English Colonies and islands of America. But, whereas, the reason for this custom was not evident, the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda in the month of January, 1757, secured from Benedict XIV, of happy memory, a decree in favor of Monsignor Benjamin Petre, Bishop of Prusa, at that time Vicar-Apostolic of London, giving him for *six years* jurisdiction over all the colonies and islands of America under English rule; and after the death of that prelate the same decree was confirmed, March 31, 1759, for *another six years* in favor of Monsignor Richard Challoner, Bishop of Deboren, at the present time Vicar-Apostolic of London.

The same Vicar-Apostolic, far from having any ambition or desire to increase his jurisdiction in those parts, would regard with evident pleasure an act of the Sacred Congregation relieving him of a burden which is already too great for him, and to which he is unable to give the necessary attention. The great distance of those provinces from his residence in London hinders him from visiting them personally. And, therefore, he cannot have the information necessary to know abuses and to correct them; he cannot administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to those faithful who remain totally deprived of this spiritual aid; he cannot furnish them

with priests, partly for the same reason of remoteness and partly because of the lack of the necessary means to meet the required outlay.

If the Sacred Congregation, moved by these considerations and by others which will easily come to mind, considers it meet to create a Vicar-Apostolic over the other English colonies and islands, it seems that the city of *Philadelphia*, in *Pennsylvania*, would be the place best suited for him to reside in, for the reason that it is a very populous city and is moreover, a seaport, and consequently is convenient for the easy exchange of letters with the other provinces of the mainland, as also with the islands. To these various reasons may be added the fact that there is no place within the English dominions where the Catholic Religion is exercised with greater freedom.

The maps appended to Hughes' *History of the Society of Jesus in North America* show the geographical location of the Catholic population in 1774.

Two other contemporary documents assist us in locating these "congregations" and in ascertaining the state of Catholic life at this period.<sup>9</sup> The first is a *Rèlation* by Father John Mattingly, dated September 6, 1773.<sup>10</sup> At the head of the first page is the statement that in 1764 there were seventeen missions in Maryland; in 1771 there were twenty-three; *anno vere currente* (1773), there were twenty. The principal house of the Society was then at Port Tobacco, in Charles County. The next in order of dignity was the house at Newtown, in St. Mary's County, and from this centre the Fathers attended the various "congregations," within a radius of twenty miles or more on Sundays and holy days of obligation. In this way Mass was celebrated once a month in all the surrounding districts. The *Relation* describes how thoroughly the missionaries laboured. From early morning until eleven o'clock confessions were heard, and then Mass was said, Holy Communion distributed, and at the end of Mass a sermon was preached and points of doctrine explained. All these ministrations were given gratuitously and only voluntary offerings were accepted.

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<sup>9</sup> These two documents (*Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite nei Congressi, America Centrale*, vol. i, fols. 608, 292) are published in the original Latin in the *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. ii, pp. 316-320.

<sup>10</sup> The only Father John Mattingly mentioned by FOLEY in the *Records S. J.* (vol vii, part i, p. 494), is one born in Maryland, January 25, 1735. He entered the Society of Jesus in Belgium, September 7, 1760, was ordained in 1770, and after the Suppression (1773), became travelling tutor to Sir William Gerard and other English Catholic gentry. He does not appear to have returned to America. He died in Ireland, November 23, 1807.

Among the varied labours of their ministry, the hardest was that of visiting the sick and dying. On account of the distance separating their flocks, one from another, long journeys had often to be made.

The Fathers themselves took no part in the secular affairs going on around them and were therefore held in high regard by Catholics and non-Catholics. They all felt the need of a bishop for the administration of Confirmation, but they recognized the difficulty of establishing a bishopric in Maryland in view of the fact that the Nonconformist element was averse to the presence of an Anglican bishop in the community. The Jesuit missions were fairly well provided for, owing to the excellent care and administration of the property they possessed from the original grants made to them in the time of Cecil Calvert. Some of the Fathers resided as chaplains with private families, and were thus enabled to extend their missionary labors to the surrounding towns. The Catholics at that time in Maryland and Pennsylvania numbered about 20,000. In Maryland there was practically complete freedom of worship, but it was more restrained than in Pennsylvania, where the Church was free.

The second of these documents, which is to be found in the same volume of the Propaganda Archives, is of later date than the *Relation* of Father Mattingly.<sup>11</sup> It purports to give a complete catalogue of all the Missions of the Society in the United States.<sup>12</sup>

*Catalogus missionum Societatis Jesu in statibus unitis Americæ.*

Collegium Georgiopolitanum. Patres 4. Scholastici 7. Sacerdotes Sæculares 1.

Domus studiorum in Washington (civitate). Patres 2. Scholastici 7. Frat. 3. Novitiatus apud White-Marsh. Patres 1. Novitii 9. Frat. 10. Sacerdotes Sæculares 1.

In comitatu Principis Georgii.

Missiones quæ pertinent ad White-Marsh.

1. Ecclesia in prædio White Marsh.

2. Annapolis sacellum in domo privata, distat 14 mill.

<sup>11</sup> HUGHES (*op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, p. 963), gives the year 1822 to this document. A copy exists in the *Georgetown Archives* under date of 1823.

<sup>12</sup> HUGHES (*op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, pp. 335-338) gives additional names to this list from one sent in 1765 by Father Hunter, the superior, to the English Provincial.

3. Prædium domini Young in quo conveniunt plurimi Catholici, distat 6 mill.
4. Congregatio McGruder. Distat 19 milliar.  
Pro his omnibus unus sacerdos sæcularis et Pater magister novitorum.

Missiones in comitatu Principis Georgii quæ pertinent ad Sanctum Thomam.

1. Congregatio vulgo Domini Diggs sacellum distat 20 mill.
2. Congregatio Boone's chapel. Distat 26 mill.
3. Congregatio Piscataway. Distat 23 mill.
4. Congregatio Mattawoman.

Missiones in comitatu Caroli quæ etiam ad Sanctum Thomam.

1. Ecclesia in prædio Sancti Thomæ.
2. Congregatio Pomfret's Neck 16 mill.
3. Congregatio Cornevallis's Neck 16 mill.
4. Congregatio Cedar's Point. Nulla ibi ecclesia.
5. Congregatio Chekomeen. Nulla ecclesia, distat 20.
6. Congregatio Newport. Distat 10.
7. Congregatio Cob-Neck. Distat 20.
8. Congregatio Upper-Zachiah. Distat 18.
9. Congregatio Lower-Zachiah. Distat 18.

Pro omnibus his tredecim missionibus sunt tres Patres e Societate, quorum unus est valde infirmus, et unus sacerdos sæcularis.

In Comitatu Sanctæ Mariæ.

1. Ecclesia in prædio Newtown.
2. Congregatio Nostræ Dominæ vulgo Meddley-Neck. Distat 12.
3. Congregatio Sancti Joannis. Distat 12.
4. Congregatio S. Aloysii. Distat 6.
5. Congregatio S. Josephi. Distat 12.
6. Congregatio SS. Cordis. Distat 12.
7. Congregatio parva trans flumen Patuxent. Distat 20.

Pro his 7 unus Pater e Societate Jesu, sed propter infirmitatem nunquam prædicat, et duo sæculares sacerdotes.

Missiones in comitatu Sanctæ Mariæ quæ pertinent ad prædium Sancti Ignatii.

1. Ecclesia in prædio.
2. Congregatio Sancti Nicolai. Distat 17.
3. Congregatio Domini Smith. Distat 12.

Duo Patres e Societate et unus Frater coadjutor.

In Marylandia.

1. In civitate Frederick-town ecclesia et domus cum prædio parvo.
2. Ecclesia in Carroll's Manor. Distans 17 mill. Unus Pater e Societate.

In littore orientali vulgo Eastern Shore.

1. Ecclesia in prædio Bohemia.
2. Ecclesia S. Josephi.



Unus Pater et frater coadjutor e Societate et unus sacerdos sæcularis.

In Pennsylvania.

1. In civitate Philadelphię, ecclesia S. Josephi et domus, unus sæcularis.
2. Ecclesia in prædio Cochenhoben [Goshenhoppen]. Unus e Societate.
3. In civitate Lancaster. Duo sacerdotes sæculares.
4. In civitate Elizabeth, quæ distat a residentia Lanc. 30 mill.
5. Mount Lebanon. 20 mill.
6. Harrisbourg (oppidum). 35 mill.
7. Sunbury. 25 mill.
8. Chester County. 15 mill.
9. Little Britain. 18 mill.

Duo sacerdotes sæculares.

Conewago etiam in Pennsylvania.

1. Ecclesia in prædio.
2. Carlisle ecclesia et domus (civitas est) distat 30.
3. In civitate York ecclesia distat. 22.
4. In oppido Littlestown, distat 6.
5. Brand sacellum, distat 9.
6. South Mountains, distat 150.

Duo Patres Societatis. Unus vero senex et infirmus, ut nunquam exire potest, audit tamen confessiones.

*Numerus sociorum in tota missione Americana:*

Sacerdotes 26.

Sæculares sacerdotes in nostris missionibus sunt septem.

Scholastici 25.

Nov. Scholastici 10.

Coadjutores 25.

Nov. coadjutores 9.

(*Summa*) 95.

The number of Jesuit priests was twenty-six at the time. There were twenty-five scholastics, ten novices, twenty-five lay brothers, and nine lay novices—making a total of ninety-five members in the Society. The different congregations are given, with their approximate distances from the central houses. It is impossible to fix the exact date of this document, but it must be after 1806, the year of the partial restoration of the Society in the United States. The figures given can, therefore, be taken only in a relative sense, but the location of the parishes or “congregations” is accurate for the period under discussion. The bulk of the Catholic population lived in Pennsylvania and Maryland. The important centres of Catholic missionary activity in Maryland were: St. Inigoes, Newtown, Port Tobacco, Whitmarsh,



Deer Creek, Frederick, and Bohemia. The estimate of 1765 claims about ten thousand adult communicants for these missions and for the chapels, and "congregations" attached to them. In Pennsylvania the chief Catholic centres were: Philadelphia, with two churches, St. Mary's and St. Joseph's; Goshenhoppen; Lancaster, and Conewago. About three thousand adult communicants belonged to these churches. Attached to these four centres were other "congregations," or private houses, where the faithful came whenever it was announced that a priest would hear confessions and celebrate Mass. The exact number of priests in the English colonies at the outbreak of the Revolution is not known with certainty. If we accept Carroll's statement of 1785 as a basis, the number could not have been over thirty. In that year there were nineteen priests in Maryland and five in Pennsylvania.<sup>13</sup> In 1773, as has been seen, there were twenty-one whose names are appended to the act of submission to the Brief of Suppression: George Hunter, John Lewis, John Bolton, Thomas Digges, Ignatius Matthews, John Ashton, Joseph Mosley, Matthias Manners, Bernard Diderick, Ferdinand Farmer, Robert Molyneux, Luke Geissler, John B. De Ritter, James Pellentz, James Frambach, Benjamin Roels, Benjamin Neale, James Walton, Peter Morris, Augustine Jenkins, and John Boarman.

Scattered throughout the colonies at this time were the remnants of the Acadians who had been forcibly ejected from Nova Scotia in 1755-56. From Massachusetts to Georgia, groups of these unfortunate Catholic exiles were thrust upon unwilling towns and cities. "The Acadians suffered as Catholics. No other cause is brought home to them . . . They were required to take an oath which, as Catholics, they felt to be against their consciences . . . They were therefore expressly condemned as Papist Recusants, condemned for their religion and not on any political ground."<sup>14</sup> Massachusetts received grudgingly some two thousand of these exiles, and Lawrence, who had carried out the nefarious work, wrote to friends in Boston urging the people to proselytize the children. Georgia had a clause in its constitu-

<sup>13</sup> Cf. SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 259-260, where the names and residences of these twenty-four priests are given.

<sup>14</sup> *The Acadian Confessors of the Faith in 1755*, in the *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, vol. ix (1884), p. 592.

tion forbidding the existence of Catholics in that colony, and the four hundred Acadians who took refuge there were inhospitably driven out. Fifteen hundred of the exiles reached South Carolina and met with sympathy, the authorities assisting them to reach Louisiana or to return to France. Those who were sent to New England were treated as pariahs, and the two thousand who reached Maryland were treated with humaneness by their fellow-Catholics. Nevertheless, they were not wanted by the Protestant element in the colony, for we read in the *Maryland Gazette* of February 10, 1757, the following formal protest against their presence:

That the wretched Acadians, in a manner quartered upon us, are become a grievance, inasmuch as we are not at present in a situation, and in circumstances, capable of seconding their own fruitless endeavors to support their numerous families, as a people plundered of their effects. For though our magistrates have taxed us, perhaps sufficient to feed such of them as cannot feed themselves, they cannot find houses, clothing and other comforts, in their condition needful, without going from house to house begging, whereby they are become a nuisance to the country hereby unable to afford necessary comfort to their own poor. And as it is no easy task for a Christian to withstand the unfortunate cravings of their distressed fellow citizens, those among us who especially possess the greatest degree of humanity, must, of course, be the greatest sufferers. But this is not all. Their religious principles in a Protestant country, being dangerous, particularly at this juncture, and their attachment to their mother-country, added to their natural resentment of the treatment they have met with, render it unsafe to harbor them in case of any success of the enemy, which visibly affords them matter of exultation on the slightest news in favor of the French and the Indians. We therefore pray that you will use your endeavors in the assembly to have this pest removed from among us, after the example of the people of Virginia and Carolina, at their own expense, as they request, or otherwise as the Assembly shall, in their wisdom, think fit. We humbly conceive that any apprehensions of their adding to the strength of the enemy, if transported into their colonies, would argue a degree of timidity not to be approved of. That, on the contrary, they would rather be burdensome to their country in their present circumstances, encumbered with their wives and children whose immediate wants will, for a long time, employ the utmost industry of a few able-bodied fathers amongst them. Besides, they need not be discouraged without binding them as strongly as people of their principles can be bound, by an oath of neutrality for so long time as may be judged needful. It will have perhaps this further effect, that since they so earnestly desire to quit his Majesty's protection, in a manner renouncing

it, they enfeeble their claim to the restitution and restoration they contend for; a point it would be greatly to the interest of the colonies to gain with a good grace.<sup>15</sup>

The Acadians arrived in Maryland at an inauspicious time in the history of religious toleration within that province. The old bigotry was alive again, and Catholics were preparing themselves for a renewal of the penal legislation of earlier days. Russell writes:

The old order of charity had changed, giving place to a new one of cold repulsion and intolerance. In the formal correspondence of the period, the stark tragedy of the Acadians and their position in Maryland, appears in striking contrast with the past traditions of the Province. We catch here and there a glimpse of husbands seeking their wives, mothers in quest of their children, of poor, starving, simple people left upon the shore destitute, consigned to the cold charity of those who feared and hated them as political enemies, and, worst of all, as Catholics. The government of the Province made a feeble and ineffectual attempt to afford some succor to these exiles, but so meagre was the provision made, that these pitiful outcasts were compelled to roam the country, dragging after them from farm-house to farm-house, their starving, ill-clothed children, begging for the very necessities of life. Governor Sharpe did, indeed, give permission for such as could procure the means to leave the Province for the more hospitable colony of Pennsylvania, but the greater number were compelled to remain, the objects of the scant charity and endurance of the Protestants, and were not allowed to receive from the Catholics the shelter and assistance which would have been gladly given.<sup>16</sup>

The French and Indian War made the Acadians enemies in the land of forced hospitality, and when in November, 1755, there landed in Philadelphia some four hundred and fifty of these exiles, "scorpions in the bowels of the country," as Governor Morris of Pennsylvania called them, the Quakers, ever true to their religious profession of love for all men, came to the assistance of the Acadians and by private and public benefactions lessened their sufferings. "Blessed be God," these Acadians wrote, "that it was our lot to be sent to Pennsylvania, where our wants have been relieved and we have in every respect been

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<sup>15</sup> Cited by SCHAFÉ, *History of Maryland from the Earliest Period to the Present Day*, vol. i, p. 478. Baltimore, 1879.

<sup>16</sup> RUSSELL, *Maryland, the Land of Sanctuary*, pp. 421-422. Baltimore, 1907.

treated with Christian benevolence and charity."<sup>17</sup> But smallpox and other epidemics carried off many among them, and the desire to return to their beloved Acadia proved too strong for the rest to remain. They disappeared, and by the time the American Revolution broke out, there were few of these confessors of the Faith alive in the colonies. In Baltimore, however, a little group remained, for there is a record that about 1756 a purchase was made of Mr. Fottrell's house as a temporary chapel. There probably for the first time the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered in the future episcopal city of John Carroll. There is no certainty about the priest who ministered to them.<sup>18</sup>

To sum up the status of the Catholic Church on the eve of the Revolution, it must be admitted that comparatively little has come down to us from the past clothed in the habiliments of historical certitude. Legends there are in abundance, and traditions in every town and city along the Atlantic coast, but no secure history can be based upon these uncertain data. The use of *aliases* on the part of the priests; the fear of committing historical facts to paper; the inefficient system of keeping records; and the hard missionary life of the day have had the regrettable effect of wrapping these years in a cloak of silence. Only occasionally in old registers that have survived do we catch a glimpse of these years of crypto-Catholicism in the colonies; or, as in old deeds that are recorded, we are enabled to picture the sturdy Catholic life that was veritably hidden in the Lord.

After the suppression of the Jesuits in 1773 no appreciable change occurred in the American colonies. The priests continued to live as heretofore under the guidance of Father John Lewis, the last Jesuit superior, and the people obeyed the clergy in all things spiritual as if nothing had occurred to change the canonical status.

The social status of the Catholics in the colonies was not an enviable one. We have, fortunately, a description for the years 1763-75 of the position of Catholics at that time in a series of

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Memorial of the Acadians Sent to King George III*, in *Researches*, vol. ix, pp. 25-32; HALIBURTON, *History of Nova Scotia*, vol. i, p. 183. Halifax, 1884. Cf. *The Acadians in Pennsylvania*, in *Researches*, vol. xxviii, pp. 108-111, based upon REED, in the *Memoirs of the Pennsylvania Historical Society*, vol. vi, pp. 283-316.

<sup>18</sup> REV. J. A. FREDERICK, *Old St. Peter's, or the Beginnings of Catholicity in Baltimore*, in the *Historical Records and Studies*, vol. v, pp. 354-391.

sermons by an Episcopalian minister, Reverend Jonathan Boucher.<sup>19</sup> The fortitude of the Catholics, he said, under trials of peculiar poignancy, was almost as unexampled as their oppressions; and their acquiescence under a long series of accumulated wrongs was such an instance of true patriotism that it entitled them to the highest respect.

With a patient firmness of character, worthy of all praise and all imitation, they have long submitted to such injuries and indignities, as their high-spirited forefathers would have ill-brooked; and such as their undegenerate posterity would not endure, were it not that they have the wisdom and the virtue to respect the laws more than their own personal feelings. Everything most dear to the human heart has been torn from them, excepting their attachment to their religion, and their determination to love and bless those fellow-subjects, who unmindful of the duties resulting from their religion, and unmoved by so endearing an example, foolishly and wickedly continue to regard Papists as Samaritans, with whom they resolve to have no dealings.

There is a quaintness about Boucher's hypocrisy. He tells the truth about the status of the Catholics in the colonies, but the reason of this appeal to his fellow-Anglicans to assume a more friendly attitude towards their Catholic neighbours has as its motive the desire to enlist their sympathies against the Puritan rebels of Massachusetts and Virginia. He writes:

I endeavour to forget the long series of oppressions and wrongs which these unfortunate people have suffered among us. Hardly a book or an article of religion has been written, hardly a sermon on any controverted point has been preached, hardly any public debate or private conversations have been held on the subject of religion or politics in which (in the strong phrase of a noted Divine of the last century) the parties have not contrived *a thwack at Popery*. . . . To justify our rigour towards them, we pretend that by their education, modes and habits of thinking, they are disqualified from exercising certain offices of citizenship, from which, therefore, we exclude them.

Sanford Cobb has described the political situation of the Catholics in his *Rise of Religious Liberty in America*. Everywhere

<sup>19</sup> *A View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution. In Thirteen Discourses Preached between the Years 1763-1775. With an Historical Preface Dedicated to George Washington, Esq., London, 1797.* The Reverend Jonathan Boucher was born in England, emigrated to America in 1754, was pastor of several Anglican parishes in Maryland, and in 1785 was obliged to leave America because of his strong Loyalist views. He died in England, April 27, 1804.



except in Pennsylvania, to be a Catholic was to cease to possess full civil rights and privileges. There can be but one interpretation to the oath of allegiance or abjuration common to the colonies: it was intended to exclude Roman Catholics from citizenship. And it is a problem of no small difficulty to explain how the Catholics of the thirteen original States, legally disabled at every turn, were in such sympathy from the beginning with the patriotic movement which led to the American Revolution. Certainly, they had nothing to expect from the Nonconformist element in the colonies but loathing and detestation.

Boucher, whose sermons have already been quoted, explains the patriotism of the Catholics as follows:

The Catholics of Maryland seemed to hesitate and to be unresolved what part they should take in the great commotions of their country which were then beginning. Their principles, no doubt, led them to side with the government, whilst their inclinations, and (as they then thought) their interest made it policy to be neutral. The persons in America who were most opposed to Great Britain had also, in general, distinguished themselves by being particularly hostile to Catholics; but then, though Dissenters and Republicans were their enemies, the friends of government could hardly be said to be their friends. In America, if they joined the Government, all they had to look for was to be bitterly persecuted by one party and to be defeated by the other. Hence for some time they appeared to be wavering and undetermined. This irresolution drew down upon them many suspicions, censures and threats . . . At length the Catholic gentleman who was possessed of one of the first fortunes in the country (in short the Duke of Norfolk of Maryland), actuated as was generally thought, solely by his desire to become a public man, for which he was unquestionably well qualified, openly espoused the cause of Congress. Soon after he became a member of that body. This seemed to settle the wavering disposition of the Catholics in Maryland; under so respectable a leader as Mr. Carroll, they all soon became good Whigs, and concurred with their fellow-revolutionists in declaiming against the misgovernment of Great Britain.

The colonial period of American history, especially during the eleven years which separated the Treaty of Paris (1763) from the passage of the Quebec Act (1774), was ending in a whirlwind campaign of anti-Catholicism, or *No Popery*, when the Revolution broke out. In those provinces where Catholics were allowed to live without public molestation, they were distrusted by the law and laid under heavy disabilities. They could not



enjoy any place of profit or of trust while they continued faithful to their religious belief, and prejudice of the *No Popery* kind was mistress of the land of future liberty. The bonds of bigotry bound down all whose conscience would not permit compromise in matters of faith. Toleration, when it did come, came not as the result of any high-minded principles of liberty on the part of the leaders of the Revolution, but accidentally as a by-product of the policy which was born with the spirit of independence.

The story of religious liberty in the United States begins with George Mason's Bill of Rights, presented in the Virginia State Convention in 1776. The sixteenth section, presented by Patrick Henry, and amended by James Madison, expressed the best conception of religious freedom uttered up to this time. With Jefferson as the leader, in the days when the Constitution was before the assembled delegates of the free and independent nation for adoption, it was a foregone conclusion that that same cleavage from "religious slavery" was to be made a part of the new government. The blow which fell, in consequence, was a disastrous one for the Episcopal clergy. Many of them had been Loyalists, and the relief which religious liberty brought was an especial boon to the Catholics in the thirteen States; but it is an idle fancy to assert that either the number or the social position of the Catholics during the War had the effect of creating the policy of non-interference in religious matters which has been the guiding star of the American spirit since that time.

CHAPTER VI  
CATHOLICS IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION  
(1775-1783)

The Catholics who aided in the success of the American Revolution can be divided for convenience sake into four classes: those residing in the colonies; the Catholic Indians of Maine and of the old Northwest; Catholic Canadian volunteers in the Revolutionary Army; and the French and Spanish allies. The status of the Catholics in the thirteen colonies has been sufficiently discussed. A distinction should be made between those Catholics living in Pennsylvania and in the other colonies. In Pennsylvania they enjoyed full religious liberty, though they were not accorded the full enjoyment of the franchise. This distinction explains the presence of loyalism in Pennsylvania Catholic circles, for that State was a centre of American Toryism; whereas everywhere else in the colonies the Revolution won the whole-hearted support of the Catholic body. The hope was that the Revolution, though begotten in intolerance, would yet be the cause of religious liberty. There are many names on the roster of Catholic patriots during these dark days—Moylan, Barry, d'Estaing, Meade, Dillon, DeGrasse, Rochambeau, FitzSimons, Colvin, Lloyd, Fitzgerald, Pulaski, Kosciuszko, the Catholic Indians of Maine—the St. John, Micmacs, Penobscot and Passamaquoddy tribes—who were important factors in the eyes of the Continental Congress, and in particular, Orono, the Catholic Chief of the Penobscots; but the name which has always been given preëminence in Catholic Revolutionary annals is that of Charles Carroll of Carrollton.

Charles Carroll of Carrollton was unquestionably one of the foremost Americans of the Revolutionary period. His *Letters of the First Citizen*, written against the famous jurist, Daniel Dulany, in 1773, won him a prominence he never afterwards

lost. His action in the burning of the *Peggy Stewart*; his outspoken attitude on independence in the Maryland Convention and in the First Continental Congress of 1774; his commission to Canada in 1776; his signature to the Declaration of Independence on August 2, 1776; his loyalty to Washington in the foiling of the Conway Cabal; his three months' residence at Valley Forge with Washington and the American troops; his part in bringing about the French Alliance; his assistance in organizing the Bank of North America with Robert Morris, Chase and others; and his later career as the First Citizen of the land down to his death in 1832—these give him a place in our annals of which all Americans are proud. During the long period of the struggle for independence, "he devoted more of his time and more of his money to the cause of the people than any other patriot; he served the people in more different positions of responsibility and usefulness than did any other man, and he never failed in a single instance to measure up to the highest standard of statesmanship and patriotism."<sup>1</sup>

To suggest, as Boucher has done, that the Catholics in the colonies, priests and laity alike, found their leader in Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and that this leadership explains their adherence to the principles of the American rebellion, would be a simple way of answering a problem we are trying to analyze here, namely, the paradox of Catholic patriotism from the very beginning of the Revolution and the *No Popery* mob cry of the first revolutionists.<sup>2</sup> It is not a popular thesis, that held by Van Tyne and others, that the more the evidence for the causes, remote and immediate, of the American Revolution is brought to light and studied, the more do the popularly given causes diminish in importance and the more does the religious, sectarian, or ecclesiastical cause force itself to the front.<sup>3</sup> This thesis has many angles of vision. In the main, it places the controversy which raged from the Proclamation Line of 1763 to the Quebec Act of 1774

<sup>1</sup> LEONARD, *Life of Charles Carroll of Carrollton*, p. 17; BYRNE, *Charles Carroll of Carrollton*. Berkeley, Cal., 1919 (Newman Hall Prize Essay).

<sup>2</sup> On March 9, 1775, at the Exchange, in New York, a Union Jack with a red field, was hoisted bearing the inscription *George III Rex—The Liberties of America—No Popery*. Cf. *Researches*, vol. xxiv, p. 151.

<sup>3</sup> VAN TYNE, *Influence of the Clergy and of Religious and Sectarian Forces on the American Revolution*, in the *American Historical Review*, vol. xix, p. 44; cf. VAN TYNE, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution*. New York, 1902.

as the chief cause of the Revolution. In its controversial phases, as Charles Evans points out, "the struggle for civil liberty in the American Colonies assumes something of the nature of religious warfare, in which the dissenting churches are opposed by the Established Church of England."<sup>4</sup> Evans' lists show the significant fact that from 1700 to 1750, two-thirds of the books and pamphlets published in the colonies were on religious questions, and from 1750 to 1775, at least one-half dealt with the religious aspect of the Revolution. The pulpit was the most direct, most effectual way of reaching the public, for the newspapers were then in their infancy; and to those who see in the eleven years of pulpit utterances on the religious clause in the Quebec Act the underlying motive for rebellion, there is little doubt that the Revolution was an anti-Catholic movement, at least, in its origin. To British writers, such as the eminent Cardinal Gasquet, the Quebec Act—"the great Charter of Religious Liberty in Canada"—was the "price paid by the Empire to secure for Canada freedom for the exercise of the Catholic religion, and was in some real sense the cause of the loss of the other American Dependencies."<sup>5</sup> Van Tyne, the historian of the loyalist element in the Revolution, believes that more weight should be given to this religious factor among the causes of the war. The economic causes, he holds, are not adequate enough to explain the bitterness of the controversy, and he rates religious bigotry, sectarian antipathy, and the influence of the Calvinist clergy as among the most important factors.<sup>6</sup> Gasquet writes<sup>7</sup>: "The 'drum ecclesiastic' was beaten for all it was worth by the bigots, both in Eng-

<sup>4</sup> *American Bibliography*, vol. v, p. 9. Chicago, 1909.

<sup>5</sup> *The Price of Catholic Freedom in Canada*, in *The Tablet* (London), July 20-27, 1912, vol. cxx, pp. 82-83, 122-125. For a different view cf. VICTOR COFFIN, *The Province of Quebec and the Early American Revolution*, pp. 480-528 (Madison, 1896), where the question why Canada did not join the States in the Revolution is ably discussed. "It is the purpose of this chapter [on the Quebec Act and the American Revolution]," he says, "to show that not only was the Quebec Act not effectual in keeping the mass of the Canadians loyal, but that what effect it did have was in exactly the opposite direction . . . overwhelming evidence shows that the French Canadians were not faithful to British Rule at this crisis, and that they were least faithful at the time when the Quebec Act might be supposed to have had most influence. Further evidence, equally strong, if not so great in quantity, shows that the effect of the Act on the mass of the people was one of alienation rather than conciliation" (*Ibid.*, pp. 487-488).

<sup>6</sup> *Influence of the Clergy, etc.*, in the *American Historical Review*, vol. xvii, p. 64.

<sup>7</sup> *Ut supra*, July 27, 1912.

land and in America, and the cry of 'Protestantism in danger' was worked up in the interest of those British colonists who held separatist views." The difficulty with this theory is that it is too simple. And yet, in the face of such collections as Griffin's *Catholics in the American Revolution*,<sup>8</sup> it cannot be lightly passed by on the score of being narrow or bigoted in itself. Griffin says:

The Revolution was not due solely to oppressive tax laws nor to restrictions on popular rights. Indeed though these hold the main place in the popular narration of causes which brought on the Revolt, it is a question for historical consideration whether these oppressions alone would have moved the body of the people to acts of resistance, had not Religion been a moving force upon the minds of the people. The active malcontents or leaders of the Revolt sought to impress upon the people that Protestantism had been assailed and might in America be overthrown. . . . We will, then, give ample evidence that an active motive of the Americans in taking up arms against Great Britain was the belief of large and influential numbers that the Protestant Religion was being assailed and threatened with oppression, and that the fear of 'Popery' was, after all, the incentive which made great numbers of the Colonists take up arms who could not have been moved to activity by recitals of oppressive tax laws which did not affect directly the great body of the people, though they may have effected those in mercantile pursuits. . . . Resistance to Popery was the cementing sentiment.<sup>9</sup>

The Quebec Act Theory of the Revolution, if such it may be called, sees in number 10 of the famous Suffolk County Resolutions, passed on September 6, 1774, the origin of the anti-Catholic phrases of the *Address to the People of Great Britain*, and of the *Petition to the King*.

10. That the late act of parliament for establishing the Roman Catholic Religion and the French laws in that extensive country, now called Canada, is dangerous in an extreme degree to the Protestant religion and to the civil rights and liberties of all Americans; and, therefore, as men and Protestant Christians, we are indispensably obliged to take all proper measures for our security.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Three volumes, published for private circulation, at the author's home, Ridley Park, Pa. (1907-1911).

<sup>9</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 1-4.

<sup>10</sup> *Journals of the Continental Congress*, vol. i, pp. 34-35. Washington, D. C. 1904. Cf. *Anti-Catholic Spirit of the Colonies as Shown on the Passage of the Quebec Bill*, in the *Researches*, vol. xxviii, pp. 384-392.



British soldiers on Bunker Hill were appealed to by the American patriots from Prospect Hill in a printed Address which besought them not to imbrue their hands in the blood of their fellow-subjects in America, because these latter were "alarmed at the establishment of Popery and Arbitrary Power in One-Half of their Country."

The Address was as follows :

*Gentlemen:*

You are about to embark for America, to compel your Fellow Subjects there to submit to **POPERY** and **SLAVERY**.

It is the Glory of the British Soldier, that he is the Defender, not the Destroyer, of the Civil and Religious Rights of the People. The English Soldiery are immortalized in History, for their Attachment to the Religion and Liberties of their Country.

When King James the Second endeavored to introduce the Roman Catholic Religion and arbitrary Power into Great Britain, he had an Army encamped on Hounslow-Heath, to terrify the People. Seven Bishops were seized upon, and sent to the Tower. But they appealed to the Laws of their Country, and were set at Liberty. When this News reached the Camp, the Shouts of Joy were so great, that they re-echoed in the Royal Palace. This, however, did not quite convince the King, of the Aversion of the Soldiers to be the Instruments of Oppression against their Fellow Subjects. He therefore made another trial. He ordered the Guards to be drawn up, and the Word was given, that those who did not chuse to support the King's Measures, should ground their Arms. When, behold, to his utter confusion, and their eternal Honour—the whole body ground their Arms.

You, gentlemen, will soon have an Opportunity of shewing equal Virtue. You will be called upon to imbrue your Hands in the Blood of your Fellow Subjects in America, because they will not admit to be Slaves, and are alarmed at the Establishment of Popery and Arbitrary Power in One Half of their Country.

Whether you will draw those Swords which have defended them against their Enemies, to butcher them into a Resignation of their Rights, which they hold as the Sons of **ENGLISHMEN**, is in your Breasts. That you will not stain the Laurels you have gained from France, by dipping them in Civil Blood, is every good Man's Hope.

Arts will no doubt be used to persuade you, that it is your Duty to obey Orders; and that you are sent upon the just and righteous Errand of crushing Rebellion. But your own Hearts will tell you, that the People may be so ill treated, as to Make Resistance necessary. You know, that Violence and Injury offered from one Man to another, has always some Pretence of Right or Reason to justify it. So it is between the People and their Rulers.



Therefore, whatever hard Names and heavy Accusation may be bestowed upon your Fellow Subjects in America, be assured they have not deserved them; but are driven, by the most cruel Treatment, into Despair. In this Despair they are compelled to defend their Liberties, after having tried, in Vain, every peaceable Means of obtaining Redress of their manifold Grievances.

Before God and Man they are right.

Your Honor, then Gentlemen, as soldiers, and your Humanity as Men, forbid you to be the Instruments of forcing Chains upon your injured and oppressed Fellow Subjects. Remember that your first obedience is due to God, and whoever bids you shed innocent Blood, bids you act contrary to his Commandments.

*I am, Gentlemen,*

*your sincere Well-wisher,*

AN OLD SOLDIER.

The Rev. Daniel Barber, who became a Catholic in 1818, in the *History of My Own Times*, gives as the popular viewpoint:

We are all ready to swear that King George, by granting the Quebec Bill (that is, the privilege to Roman Catholics of worshipping God according to their own conscience), had thereby become a traitor, had broken his coronation oath, was secretly a papist, and whose design was to oblige this country to submit itself to the unconstitutional power of the English monarch, and under him and by his authority to be given up and destroyed, soul and body, by that frightful image with seven heads and ten horns. The real fear of Popery in New England had its influence; it stimulated many people to send their sons to join the ranks. The common word then was: *No King, No Popery*.<sup>11</sup>

The colonial opinion is well described by Alexander Hamilton in his *Full Vindication of the Measures of Congress*, in the following trenchant paragraph:

The affair of Canada is still worse. The Romish faith is made the established religion of the land, and his Majesty is placed at the head of it. The free exercise of Protestant faith depended upon the pleasure of the Governor and Council. The Parliament was not content with introducing arbitrary power and Popery into Canada with its former limits, but they have annexed to it vast tracts which surround the Colonies. Does not your blood run cold to think an English Parliament should pass an act for the establishment of arbitrary power and Popery in such an extensive country. If they had any regard to the freedom and happiness of mankind they would never have done it. If they had been friends to the Protestant cause, they never would have

<sup>11</sup> Page 17. Washington, D. C., 1823.

provided such a nursery for its great enemy. They would never have given such encouragement to Popery. The thought of their conduct in this particular shocks me. It must shock you, too, my friends. Beware of trusting yourselves to men who are capable of such an action. They may as well establish Popery in New York and the other colonies as they did in Canada. They had no more right to do it there than here. Your lives, your property, your religion, are all at stake.

The presence of this bitterness in the *Address to the People of Great Britain* and in the *Petition to the King* is explainable on the ground of this popular sentiment. The tare in the wheat of all this indignation is the sedulous care with which all reference to the Quebec Act is silenced in the *Address to the Inhabitants of Quebec*, prepared and signed by the same American leaders. They wrote—let us hope without hypocrisy—“We are too well acquainted with the liberality of sentiment distinguishing your nation to imagine that difference of religion will prejudice you against a hearty amity with us. You know that the transcendent nature of freedom elevates those who unite in her cause, above all such low-minded infirmities. The Swiss Cantons furnish a memorable proof of this truth. Their union is composed of Roman Catholic and Protestant States, living in the utmost concord and peace with one another and thereby enabled, ever since they bravely vindicated their freedom, to defy and defeat every tyrant that has invaded them.” The dates of the composition of these three important documents, embryonic of the Declaration of Independence, are rather close (October 21-26, 1774), in case one wishes to uphold the integrity of leaders such as John Adams and John Jay, both violently opposed to religious freedom; Samuel Chase; Richard Henry Lee, who declared that “of all the bad acts of Parliament the Quebec Act is the worst”; Patrick Henry; and George Washington; and to protect their good name from the alleged remark of the Canadians—*Perfidious Congress!*

A comparison of these three state papers <sup>12</sup> may help the reader to understand the sentiment expressed by the Canadians:

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<sup>12</sup> *Journals of the Continental Congress*, vol. i, pp. 81-89, 115-120.

Address to the People of Great Britain  
Friday, October 21, 1774

... That we think the Legislature of Great Britain is not authorized by the constitution to *establish a religion, fraught with sanguinary and impious tenets*, or, to erect an arbitrary form of government, in any quarter of the globe. . . . And by another Act the Dominion of Canada is to be so extended, modelled, and governed, as that by being disunited from us, detached from our interests, by civil as well as religious prejudices, that by their numbers daily swelling with Catholic emigrants from Europe, and by their devotion to Administration, so friendly to their religion, they might become formidable to us, and on occasion be fit instruments in the hands of power, to reduce the ancient free Protestant Colonies to the same state of slavery with themselves. . . . *Nor can we suppress our astonishment that a British Parliament should ever consent to establish in that country a religion that has deluged your island in blood, and dispersed impiety, bigotry, persecution, murder and rebellion through every part of the world.*

Address to the Canadians  
Wednesday, October 26, 1774

... These are the rights you are entitled to and ought at this moment in perfection, to exercise. *And what is offered to you by the late Act of Parliament in their place? Liberty of conscience in your religion? No. God gave it to you; and the temporal powers with which you have been and are connected, firmly stipulated for your enjoyment of it.* If laws, divine and human, could secure it against the despotic caprices of wicked men, it was secured before. . . . *We are all too well acquainted with the liberality of sentiment distinguishing your nation, to imagine, that difference of religion will prejudice you against a hearty amity with us.* You know, that the transcendent nature of freedom elevates those, who unite in her cause, above all such low-minded infirmities. The Swiss Cantons furnish a memorable proof of this truth. Their union is composed of Roman Catholic and Protestant States, living in the utmost concord and peace with one another, and thereby enabled, ever since they bravely vindicated their freedom, to defy and defeat every tyrant that has invaded them.

Petition to the King  
Wednesday, October 26, 1774

... In the last sessions of parliament, an act was passed for blocking up the harbour of Boston; and another, empowering the governor of Massachusetts-bay to send persons indicted for murder in that province to another colony or even to Great Britain for trial whereby such offenders may escape legal punishment; a third, for altering the chartered constitution of government in that province; and a fourth for extending the limits of Quebec, abolishing the English and restoring the French laws, whereby great numbers of English freemen are subjected to the latter, *and establishing an absolute government and the Roman Catholic religion throughout those vast regions*, that border on the westerly and northerly boundaries of the free Protestant English settlements; and the fifth for the better providing suitable quarters for officers and soldiers in his majesty's service in North America.

It is hardly necessary to treat in detail the anti-Catholic invective which reached an intense stage on the eve of the Revolution. The *American Archives*<sup>13</sup> are filled with examples of this spirit of hostility to the Church, an hostility which lasted down to the French Alliance.<sup>14</sup> But the prevalence of this bigotry does not explain the problem, namely, that of Catholic American loyalty to American arms. Apart from the Quebec Act, there were other reasons why Catholics should have been found among the Loyalists. The official class and the clergy of the Established or Episcopal Church were largely of this anti-independence group. "The officers and clergy received the support of land-owners and the substantial business men, the men who were satisfied with the existing order of things. The aristocracy of culture, of dignified professions and colleges, of official rank and hereditary wealth was in a large measure found in the Tory party."<sup>15</sup> Although we find among the Catholics some of the most aristocratic and wealthy of the colonists, and certainly no other clergy in the provinces could be compared to the Catholic priests for culture and refinement, nevertheless it is impossible to find a single case similar to that, for instance, of the Rev. Jonathan Boucher, whom we have quoted, who was driven out of America for loyalty to the King; even Griffin, whose method of research, though slightly crude, left few documents untouched, could discover no Catholic of important social or financial standing who sided with Great Britain in the struggle.

But it is not true, as is generally believed by Catholics, on the assertions of their historians, that there were no Catholic Tories in the colonies during the Revolution. To a certain extent John Gilmary Shea is responsible for this tradition. In an address before the United States Catholic Historical Society in 1884, he said: "The Catholics spontaneously, universally, and energetically gave their adhesion to the cause of America, and, when the time came, to American Independence. There was no faltering, no

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<sup>13</sup> PETER FORCE, *American Archives*, ivth series, 6 vols. (March 7, 1777-August 21, 1776), Washington, D. C., 1837-1853. Cf. *Catholic and Anti-Catholic Items in American Colonial Papers*, in the *United States Catholic Historical Magazine*, vol. i (1887), pp. 81, 203, 316, 442.

<sup>14</sup> A choice collection of anti-Catholic invectives on this question will be found in GRIFFIN, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 1-40, 279.

<sup>15</sup> VAN TYNE, *The Loyalists, etc.*, pp. 4-5.

division, every Catholic in the land was a Whig. In the list of Tories and Loyalists, in the volumes written since about them, you cannot find the name of a single Catholic. There were no Catholic Tories."

This is an echo of his words, to be found in an article in the *American Catholic Quarterly Review*: "There were no Tories, no falterers and final deserters among the Catholics; none to shout for Congress, while they carefully carried a British protection for emergencies. The Catholics were, to a man, with their clergy, staunch and true, which can be said of none of the sects."<sup>16</sup> Griffin takes Shea to task for this general statement: "When we know," he says, "how Catholics fared at the hands of their fellow colonists, and remember the deep anti-Catholic hostility to 'Papists' in the early days of the Revolution, we regard it as a credit to those Catholics who were Tories rather than as an ignominy."<sup>17</sup> The list given by Griffin does not, it is true, contain the name of any Catholic colonist of social or political prominence, but the list is a large one, and Father Molyneux, the pastor of the Church in Philadelphia during the Revolution, is placed thereon, because "not a line or word of his for or against the Revolution has ever been produced."<sup>18</sup> For that matter, it would be hard to show, aside from Father John Carroll's part in the delegation to Canada in 1776, that the Catholic clergy took

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<sup>16</sup> Vol. xxiii (1876), p. 154. A typical illustration of this popular legend will be found in the article referred to—"never was there such harmonious Catholic action as that in favor of American Independence a hundred years ago. The Catholics in the country were all Whigs . . . and there are no Catholic names in all the lists of Tories" (p. 499). It is difficult to say how this legend of a unanimous Catholic support of the purposes of the Revolution arose; but from the similarity of the phraseology, one is inclined to believe that it had its origin in the letter written by Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Baltimore, February 20, 1829, to George Washington Parke Custis, the adopted son of President Washington, in which he says: "When I signed the Declaration of Independence, I had in view not only the independence of England but the toleration of all sects, professing the Christian Religion, and communicating to them all great rights. Happily this wise and salutary measure has taken place for eradicating religious feuds and persecution, and become a useful lesson to all governments. Reflecting, as you must, on the disabilities, I may truly say, of the proscription of the Roman Catholics in Maryland, you will not be surprised that I had much at heart this grand design founded on mutual charity, the basis of our holy religion" (Cf. *Researches*, vol. xiv, p. 27, from the *National Gazette*, Philadelphia, February 26, 1829). One is at liberty to suspect that the great Catholic patriot was reading this laudable motive into his part in the Revolution a half-century before; it is the only statement of this kind to be found in his writings.

<sup>17</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 167.

<sup>18</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 169.



any active steps in the patriotic cause.<sup>19</sup> The Roman Catholic Regiment, recruited in Philadelphia, in 1777-1778, while General Howe and his officers occupied that city, was in command of Lieutenant Colonel Alfred Clinton, who was then a member of St. Mary's parish. Clinton, it is true, was able to raise only a group of 180 Catholics, and the regiment dwindled to about eighty men in five months. We find Father Farmer's name given as chaplain, though it is not certain that he accepted the post.<sup>20</sup> Bancroft has laid undue stress on the existence of this Roman Catholic regiment of Tories,<sup>21</sup> but the truth is that Catholics were as divided as others were. There were gallant warriors among the Quakers and there were Loyalists among the Presbyterians; and the wonder is that the Catholic body, after a century of persecution by the colonial leaders, did not remain entirely neutral.

Washington's action at Cambridge in issuing an order on "Pope's Day," November 5, 1775, to his soldiers that "the observance of that ridiculous and childish custom of burning the effigy of the Pope" would not be permitted, may have been that of a brave and tolerant mind; or it may have been purely a political move, owing to the fact that Congress was then making every exertion to win the support of the Catholics in Canada, in the northwest, and in Maine;<sup>22</sup> but it was significant in this sense that from the day the first shot was fired at Lexington on April 19, 1775, the patriots, who, upon their own declaration, had gone to war with Great Britain, among other grievances, for the preservation of Protestantism, began quickly to subdue the religious element in the struggle. When the French Alliance was in the air, however, there was a recrudescence of the anti-Catholic spirit, on the part of the Loyalists, especially after Louis XVI had recognized the independence of the United States (February 6, 1778).

<sup>19</sup> KIRLIN, *op. cit.*, p. 104; O'BRIEN, *Hidden Phase, etc.*, pp. 188-204.

<sup>20</sup> In a letter (cf. GRIFFIN, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 325-339) to a priest in London, dated Philadelphia, March 2, 1778, Father Farmer says that though asked in September, 1777, he had not yet accepted the post. To have done so would have been imprudent for the British evacuated Philadelphia on June 18, 1778.

<sup>21</sup> *History of the United States*, vol. x, p. 175. New York, 1834.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *Researches*, vol. xxiii, (1906), pp. 13-14; *Writings of Washington*, vol. ii, pp. 123-124; for a history of "Pope's Day" in the colonies, cf. *Researches*, vol. xxiv (1907), pp. 132-136.



The most vulnerable point of attack on the French Alliance was the fact that the ally was Catholic. The Tories declared that Congress adopted all sorts of Romish mummary. Loyalist newspapers printed absurd canards announcing that the French king was preparing a fleet which should come to America and convert his new subjects. Some of the vessels were laden with tons of holy water and casks of consecrated oil. A thousand chests of relics, beads and crucifixes were ready, and a vast number of hair shirts, cowls and scourges. Another vessel contained many thousand consecrated wafers, crucifixes, rosaries and massbooks as well as bales of indulgences. To provide for the conversion of heretics of whom America had many, the good king has not forgotten the necessary equipment of wheels, hooks, pincers, shackles, and firebrands. To instruct the Americans in the use of these pious instruments, there was ready an army of priests, confessors and mendicants . . . the contract for a Bastille in New York had already been granted, and America would soon enjoy the blessings of French government and the felicity of Popery.<sup>23</sup>

The French Alliance, the friendly attitude of Spain during the American Revolution,<sup>24</sup> the loyalty of the Catholic Indians of Maine; the assistance of Father Gibault in the West, the active coöperation of the French Army, and the gift of six million dollars by the Catholic bishops and priests of France to the new Republic, in 1780,<sup>25</sup> gave a very different outlook to the religious causes of the Revolution. The anti-Catholic spirit, therefore, would seem to have died out among the patriots only to linger with all the bitterness of defeat among those who hated to see the colonies free and independent. Probably the last phase of the bigotry which has left a smirch on the Revolution is the treason of Benedict Arnold, for the eye that guided his defiant vindication of his disloyalty had lately seen "your mean and profligate Congress at Mass for the soul of a Roman Catholic in purgatory and participating in the rites of a Church against whose anti-Christian corruption your pious ancestors would bear witness with their blood."<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> VAN TYNE, *The Loyalists, etc.*, p. 154; cf. FISCHER, *The Struggle for American Independence*, vol. ii, pp. 119-121. Philadelphia, 1908.

<sup>24</sup> MCCARTHY, *The Attitude of Spain during the American Revolution*, in the *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. ii, pp. 47-65.

<sup>25</sup> *The French Clergy's Gift to America*, in the *Catholic Mind*, vol. xviii (April 22, 1920), pp. 147-153; also in GRIFFIN, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 389-396.

<sup>26</sup> This refers to the Requiem Mass at St. Joseph's Church, Philadelphia, for the soul of Juan de Miralles, the Spanish Agent, who died at Washington's camp, Morristown, N. J., April 28, 1780. Arnold was present, not having had courage to decline, as did Dr. Benjamin Rush, because attending was not compatible with the principles

Like the great rivers of the country, American Independence had many sources; and while each of these sources can be traced to its origin, it is difficult to fix upon the spot where each one joins itself to the great river that swept the country into freedom in 1776. The religious source is the most turbulent and crooked of all these tributary streams and upon its flow the frail bark of the Catholic Church in the country, while directed by its leaders towards the meeting of the waters, was not uncertain of wreck-age in the mighty river below.

The two Carrolls—John and Charles—are not alone among the members of their Faith in the ranks of the rebels. There are other Catholic priests besides John Carroll in the scene. There is Father Lotbinière, "chaplain of the United States," as he signs himself in his letter to Congress, dated Philadelphia, July 8, 1777;<sup>27</sup> there is Father Peter Huet de la Valinière, the "perfect rebel," as Governor Haldimand of Canada called him, and who was deported because "he was too dangerous at this present crisis to be allowed to remain here (Quebec);"<sup>28</sup> there were the numerous chaplains of the French navy, some of whom were to remain as missionaries under Carroll's Prefecture: <sup>29</sup> Father Sera- phim Bandol, O.F.M., the chaplain to the French Ministers; Father La Poterie, the unworthy founder of the Church in Boston; and Father Sebastian De Rosey, O.M.Cap., who laboured until 1813 in Maryland. There were the French Army chaplains, some of whom are well-known in Catholic annals: Abbé Robin, the author of the *Nouveau Voyage dans l'Amérique Septentrionale*, which was translated by the poet of the Revolution, Philip Freneau, and published at Boston, in 1783; Father Paul de St. Pierre, who laboured in the Illinois country, and died at New Orleans, in 1826; Father Charles Whelan, around whom Carroll's first serious difficulty as prefect-apostolic was to

of a Protestant. (GRIFFIN, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 257.) Arnold's proclamation will be found in Rivington's *Gazette*, for November 1, 1780. Cf. VAN TYNE, *The Loyalists, etc.*, p. 188.

<sup>27</sup> GRIFFIN, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 41-63, 92-95.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 75-91; cf. TÊTU, *L'Abbé Pierre Huet de la Valinière*, in the *Bulletin des Recherches Historiques*, vol. x, no. 5.

<sup>29</sup> The list of chaplains with the French auxiliary forces contains the names of ninety priests. Cf. GRIFFIN, *op. cit.*, vol. iii, pp. 286-293, from *Les Combattants François de la Guerre Américaine (1778-1783)*. (Paris, 1903.) Cf. DONTOL, *Histoire de la Participation de la France à l'Établissement des États-Unis d'Amérique* (Paris, 1901); DURAND, *Documents on the American Revolution*. New York, 1889.

centre; and the celebrated Abbé Raynal, who stayed but a short time and returned an ardent Loyalist.<sup>30</sup>

There were other Catholic men of note in the forefront of the patriot party besides Charles Carroll of Carrollton. Michael J. O'Brien has given us a distinctly new light on Catholic coöperation in the war in his *Hidden Phase of American History*, and Griffin has gathered the names of many persons who served and have received honour and renown—Commodore John Barry, the Father of the American Navy; General Stephen Moylan, "Muster-Master General to the Army of the United Colonies," and the Colonel of the Light Horse Dragoons; Colonel John Fitzgerald, aide-de-camp and secretary to General Washington; Thomas Fitz Simons, a Catholic signer of the Constitution; George Meade, Dr. Joseph Cauffmann, Colonel Francis Vigo, Orono, and the most romantic figure of adventure during the whole war, Timothy Murphy. The names of two foreign officers, probably Catholics, in the American Army are well known—Count Pulaski and Kosciuszko. Lafayette, though born a Catholic, neglected his faith until on his deathbed. Father Charles Constantine Pise, when Chaplain of the United States Senate, in an address delivered on the Fourth of July, 1833, in the House of Delegates, at Annapolis, recalled to his hearers the fact "that the nations which gave birth to those immortal benefactors of America, those pure and lofty lovers of liberty and republicanism, were Roman Catholic." France, the birthplace of so many of the gallant defenders of the principles for which America fought, and Poland, "the home of the spirit of freedom," were Catholic lands; and the conduct of their sons, "in our regard, ought to silence forever the voice of prejudice, which, even at the present day, proclaims the Roman Catholic religion hostile to the genius of republican institutions."<sup>31</sup> Charles Carroll of Carrollton's sentiment in 1829 that he signed the Declaration of Independence for the purpose of bringing about toleration of all sects professing the Christian religion, and communicating to them all equal rights, may be the mellowed reflection of an old man of ninety, whose words at this time were

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. FISCHER, *The True Story of the American Revolution*, p. 212, Philadelphia, 1902.

<sup>31</sup> The address was printed in the *Catholic Expositor and Literary Magazine*, for July, 1842.

always couched in the pious accents of religion and of peace. The truth is that American Catholics in 1775 had little to choose in either side of the quarrel. Independence might not mean freedom for them, and the history of the adoption of the First Amendment by the thirteen original States shows how perilously they gambled when they threw their weight and financial backing into the patriots' cause.

The coöperation of Father Peter Gibault in the winning of the West during the Revolution presents a problem. In the French towns of the old Illinois country there were few who favoured England in the struggle. After the treaty with France (1778) the friendship for America became more outspoken. The exploits of Colonel George Rogers Clark in Kentucky were to be followed by the conquest of the Illinois country. Kaskaskia, one of the oldest of these French posts, was taken on July 4, 1778, and with the help of Father Gibault, the "Patriot Priest of the West," as he is usually called, Clark was enabled to win over the other posts, such as Vincennes, which was taken on February 25, 1779. Theodore Roosevelt has said that Gibault was "a devoted and effective champion of the American cause,"<sup>32</sup> and Shea claims that this conquest of the West was due "mainly to the influence of Rev. Peter Gibault." In his *Colonial History of Vincennes*, Law says that "no man has paid a more sincere tribute to the services rendered by Rev. Mr. Gibault to the American cause than Clark himself."<sup>33</sup>

Father Peter Gibault was born at Montreal, Canada, in 1737. He was educated at the Seminary of Quebec and was ordained to the priesthood on March 19, 1768. Shortly afterwards he was entrusted by Bishop Briand with the missions of Illinois, and acted as vicar-general of that part of the vast Quebec Diocese. He resided mostly at Kaskaskia, though his name is found in the church registers at St. Genevieve, Vincennes, and Cahokia. For a long time he was the only priest in the old Illinois country, and it was at Kaskaskia that Colonel Clark first met him in 1778. For his services to the American cause, he received the formal thanks of the Virginia Legislature. To have taken so bold a stand in favour of American independence undoubtedly cost the

<sup>32</sup> *The Winning of the West*, vol. ii, p. 190.

<sup>33</sup> Pages 53-55. Vincennes, 1858.

valiant priest his post as Vicar-General of Bishop Briand. Charges seem to have been made against him, but whether connected with his coöperation with the conquest by Clark is uncertain. There is a document in the Quebec Archives, dated June 29, 1780, in which Briand recalls Father Gibault to Quebec. There is nothing to show that he obeyed, for between the years 1776 and 1783 there are no letters in the Quebec Archives from Father Gibault.<sup>34</sup> On May 22, 1788, he wrote to Bishop Briand asking for leave to return to Canada, especially because he feels a repugnance against serving under another bishop either in Spain or in "republican America." In this same letter we find him writing as follows: "As for opposition to me because of the fear that I may have been or was active for the American Republic, you have only to reread my first letter in which I gave you an account of our capture, and my last letter in which I sent you a certificate of my conduct at Post Vincennes, in the capture of which they said I had taken a hand, and you will see that not only did I not meddle with anything, but on the contrary I always regretted and do regret every day the loss of the mildness of British rule."<sup>35</sup> At this same time Gibault was in correspondence with Father Carroll regarding the exercise of his faculties in the newly acquired territory. Carroll wrote to him on May 5, 1788, telling him that he would not be unmindful of Gibault's twenty years of service in the Illinois country, but that he was waiting for information from Canada on the method of making the necessary change in ecclesiastical government.<sup>36</sup> Carroll had learned that the Bishop of Quebec had taken umbrage at his exercise of jurisdiction in the former French missions, and he hoped that some arrangement might be made between the United States Government and Quebec for the continuance of Quebec's authority. Father Huet de la Valinière had been sent as Vicar-General to the Illinois country by Carroll, but with instructions not to interfere with Gibault until the question of jurisdiction should be settled. Father Gibault left the Illinois country in 1791, after

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<sup>34</sup> Gibault's correspondence with Bishop Briand (*Quebec Archiepiscopal Archives*) will be found in *Records*, vol. xx, pp. 406-430.

<sup>35</sup> *Records*, vol. xx, p. 430

<sup>36</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9A-G1; Carroll's last letter to Gibault (Jan. 23, 1792, *ibid.*, Case 9A-G3) gives us no intimation of Gibault's plans.



having unsuccessfully appealed to General St. Clair, then Governor of the Northwest Territory, to have certain lands deeded to him for his support.<sup>37</sup> What became of him after this time is unknown, only the record of his death at New Madrid, about 1804, being certain.<sup>38</sup>

All attempts, however laudable, to ascertain the exact quota of American and foreign Catholic soldiers in the Revolutionary Army, are of little value since they are based on criteria which cannot bear thorough investigation. It was natural for all the Irish colonists, Catholic and Protestant, to ally themselves with a cause which gave them the opportunity of a blow at their hereditary foe. It was also to be expected that in those days no serious difficulty would be encountered in France to recruit regiments for the war with England, even though the seas had to be crossed before their weapons could be drawn. The American army, judging by the regiment lists we possess, would seem to be predominantly made up of Irish and French officers and soldiers. That the majority of these French adherents to the cause were Catholics, is now an established fact; and the assertion scarcely needs proof that the 7,800 French soldiers at Yorktown, together with the 20,000 men in the fleets of DeGrasse and DeBarras, were of the Catholic Faith. The presence of the French fleet with its chaplains stimulated a change of sentiment on the part of the Americans in the matter of their attitude towards the Catholic religion. They were too hard-headed and too utilitarian not to subdue the old antipathy, when it was to their benefit to do so. Religious antagonisms had played their part in cementing the independent spirit of the American colonists, but once the larger question of freedom was understood in all its force and potency, the watchword became: "Difference in religion should make no difference between those seeking liberty."

There will always remain for the historian of the American Revolution the thorny question of how far religious differences entered into the causal elements of that great fight for freedom.

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<sup>37</sup> *Illinois Historical Collections*, vol. v, p. 585.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. *Researches*, vol. xv, p. 157; ALERDING, *History of the Diocese of Vincennes*, pp. 64-68.

Few American historians give sufficient attention to this paradox of the war—the anti-Catholic outbursts among the colonists at the passage of the Quebec Act and the striking coöperation of Catholics, both American and foreign, in the cause of the Revolution. Only a few, and among them is the noted Benedictine historian Gasquet, have a definite thesis on the question. “The American Revolution,” writes Gasquet, “was not a movement for civil and religious liberty, its principal cause was the bigoted rage of the American Puritan and Presbyterian ministers at the concession of full religious liberty and equality to Catholics of French Canada. The Taxation Acts were only a minor cause, or rather occasion, and the dispute could have been settled by constitutional agitation without secession but for Puritan firebrands and the bigotry of the people.”

Cardinal Gasquet, however, leaves an important part of the question unsolved; he does not explain why Catholic leaders like the two Carrolls took such a prominent part, from the very beginning, in the cause of independence. Nor does he explain the outstanding factor in Catholic coöperation, the French Alliance. The Catholic historian of those days of struggle for national freedom has many difficulties to explain; and his work has been complicated to a considerable degree by the number of legends which have been interwoven into the general story of Catholic coöperation in the Revolution. Many of these legends bear the stamp of their origin, namely, an over-zealous enthusiasm to claim as much of the glory as possible; others are subtle and require historical disproof. Among these is the oft-quoted story that it was through Father John Carroll that the Pope used his influence to induce King Louis of France to aid America. This claim, entirely fictitious, is part of the general traditional belief that John Carroll had aided Jefferson in drafting the Declaration of Independence. The climax of these popular legends is the one which reports that King George III refused to sign the Catholic Emancipation Bill (1829) because of his hatred for John Carroll. “He detached America from my dominions by the aid of the French army and navy, and the force of the Irish Catholics”—such is the supposed speech of the King to Pitt! *Nimis probans, nihil probans*. The truth is that Father John Carroll took no active part in the Revolution, apart

from his invitation by the Continental Congress to accompany the American Commissioners to Quebec. That fact, indeed, gives him a prominence in Revolutionary Catholic annals, shared by none, but all else claimed for him by over-enthusiastic writers is historically untenable.

## CHAPTER VII

### JOHN CARROLL'S MISSION TO CANADA

(1776)

That the American opposition to the Act granting religious liberty to all who lived beyond the Proclamation Line was a short-sighted policy, and one to which must be credited the worst failure of the war is now an accepted fact among historians. "It is easy," Gasquet writes, "to conceive how fiercely a Protestantism as jealous and sensitive as that of New England must have resented the establishment of Catholicism in Canada." The Protestant churches became as so many meeting-houses for the purpose of protesting against the iniquitous Act, and the pulpits resounded with proclamations against Parliament. All the contemporary sources for the period are so filled with invectives over the Quebec Bill that historians like Gasquet are within the strictest rules of historical criticism in emphasizing the predominance of the anti-Catholic feelings of the times. The other intolerable Acts seem to be forgotten after June 17, 1774, when the Quebec Bill became a law; and though no one would venture to assert that the Bill was the real *casus belli*, nevertheless its passage and the opposition it created in the colonies are inevitably bound up with the Revolution. The Archives of the Archbishop's House in Quebec contain for this phase of the war many documents which have not yet been studied and without which the influence of American bigotry cannot be fully and impartially weighed. Commenting upon the religious toleration granted by the Quebec Act and upon the fact that anti-Catholicism was still at that time a popular platform in Great Britain and the colonies, Dr. Alvord points out in his masterly thesis, *The Mississippi Valley in British Politics*, that historical events are usually so complex in their nature that they elude all adequate explanation. "The speculative mind," he writes, "finds

delight in the search for fundamental motives of human action and may demand a more precise definition of the Quebec Act in terms of political philosophy.”<sup>1</sup> One man at that time had no illusions about its influence in American politics, and it is this man whom John Carroll, as a Catholic priest, had to face in his endeavour to make the Canadians forget all the bitter things said and done before the outbreak of the Revolution. That man was Jean Briand, Bishop of Quebec, and sole ecclesiastical leader of the Catholics of Canada.

Bishop Briand saved Canada to the British Empire. He realized the difficulty of the task his oath of allegiance to the English crown imposed upon him. Many of the *habitans* were eager to strike a blow at England in revenge for the downfall of French power in Canada, and his courage is seen in the use of those ecclesiastical weapons, suspension and excommunication. It needed a strong hand to hold Canada in check in spite of the fact that the faith of the Canadians had been so generously vilified in the colonies; and Briand won out, even though the priests of his episcopal city and elsewhere had been shot at by American sympathizers.

There is a dramatic touch, therefore, to the distinctly Catholic act on the part of the First Continental Congress, when it sent to Canada, in company with Franklin and Chase, Charles Carroll of Carrollton and Father John Carroll, the foremost Catholics of the rebelling colonies, to interview the leaders of Church and State on the banks of the St. Lawrence.

The strategic importance of Canada to the American cause was obvious from the beginning of the war. The New England colonies could easily have been isolated by a British force working southwards from Quebec and Montreal as their base. Two expeditions were therefore planned in 1775 by the Americans, and they may be classed as “the most aggressive and daring effort that the patriots made during the war.”<sup>2</sup> The two expeditions under the command of Generals Philip Schuyler, Richard Montgomery, and Benedict Arnold, failed miserably, and Carleton “slowly but surely defeated and hammered out of

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii, p. 248. Cleveland, 1917.

<sup>2</sup> FISHER, *True History of the American Revolution*, p. 271. Philadelphia, 1902.



Canada the little patriot army.”<sup>3</sup> Arnold, who was in command after Montgomery’s death, began the retreat in the early summer of 1776. In February, 1776, Congress met to discuss the report of its secret committee on the Canadian invasion. The *Journals of the Continental Congress* give us a summary of this report:

The Committee of secret correspondence report that they have conferred with a Person just arrived from Canada. . . . He says that when the Canadians first heard of the Dispute they were generally on the American side; but that by the Influence of the Clergy and the *noblesse*, who had been continually preaching and persuading them against us, they are brought into a State of Suspense or Uncertainty which side to follow. That papers printed by the Tories at New York have been read to them by the priests, assuring them that our Design was to deprive them of their religion as well as their Possessions. . . . That he therefore thinks it would be of great Service if some Persons from the Congress were sent to Canada, to explain *visu voce* to the People there the Nature of our Dispute with England. . . .<sup>4</sup>

The following day, February 15, 1776, it was resolved that a Committee of Three (two of whom were to be members of Congress) be appointed to proceed to Canada, “there to pursue such instructions as shall be given them by Congress.” The members chosen were Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Chase and Charles Carroll of Carrollton. It was further resolved “that Mr. Carroll be requested to prevail on Mr. John Carroll to accompany the Committee to Canada.”<sup>5</sup>

Father Carroll was then at Rock Creek, the guest of his mother, attending to the spiritual wants of the Catholics in that vicinity. His residence there has already been mentioned, but it needs a word of explanation. The two problems of imminent import to the secularized Jesuits in 1774 were first, the upholding

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 286.

<sup>4</sup> *Journals of Continental Congress*, vol. iv (1776), p. 148. Washington, D. C., 1906.

<sup>5</sup> Franklin was then over seventy years of age. In a letter to a friend, dated February 18, 1776, speaking of the Committee, John Adams writes: “The characters of the two first you know. The last is not a member of Congress, but a gentleman of independent fortune, perhaps the largest in America—a hundred and fifty or two hundred thousand pounds sterling; educated in some University in France, though a native of America; of great abilities and learning, complete master of the French language, and a professor of the Roman Catholic religion; yet a warm, a firm, a zealous supporter of the rights of America, in whose cause he has hazarded his all.” (Cf. ROWLAND, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 145.)

of authority among themselves until the Holy See should provide for their government in religious matters, and secondly, the protection of the property entrusted to them as members of the Society of Jesus for missionary purposes in the colonies. Father John Lewis, the last of the Jesuit superiors, continued after 1773 to act as Vicar-General of the London District. This arrangement was agreed to by all with one exception, and a quasi-association of the clergy was formed under Father Lewis as chief. This exception was John Carroll himself. Shea says that it was because their association lacked the formal sanction of the Vicar-Apostolic of London, Dr. Challoner, and of the authorities in Rome. "Prudence dictated caution, and he resolved to act simply as a missionary priest under the faculties he held, rather than become subject to removal from place to place."<sup>6</sup> This caution, however, does not explain Carroll's attitude, because he knew what a loosely knitted organization the body of the clergy in the English colonies had always been.

The authority of the Vicar-Apostolic of London from 1685 down to 1757 was a rather shadowy one, but the Jesuits were so accustomed to living under the rule of their superior that the continuance of Father Lewis' authority was quite reasonable. Father Carroll came back to Maryland with faculties from Bishop Challoner, and of course could not refuse to recognize Challoner's Vicar-General, Father Lewis; but, though it seems apparent that he meant to have his independence, in order to remain at Rock Creek with his mother, there was a more serious reason for his decision not to take part in the new association of the clergy. It is not only the prudent resolve of a priest who may have felt that such an association was, in spirit at least, a violation of the wishes of the Holy See in the matter of the Suppression, but also the action of a determined patriot. At Rock Creek "the American priest," as Shea calls him, "beheld a field of labour where much could be accomplished. There were Catholics in the neighbourhood, and many at greater or less distance who could be reached by a priest willing to devote himself to their service. There were stations in Virginia which had been occasionally attended by the Fathers till the difficulties of the

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<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 85. Cf. *Researches*, vol. xxiii, p. 183; *Woodstock Letters*, vol. xxxiv, p. 128.

Order diminished the number of missionaries, and none came from abroad to replace those whose vigor was impaired by age or over-exertion.”<sup>7</sup> Father John Carroll could easily have travelled all over southern Maryland and the northern part of Virginia, and pass his days in visiting relatives of both sides of his family, the Carrolls, the Darnalls, the Youngs and the Brents. Certainly he did not shirk work in his new field, and he began at once to visit all the Catholic homes in that part of the old Maryland mission. A room in his mother’s house at Rock Creek was set aside as a chapel for the Catholics of the surrounding country, and the people gathered to hear Mass and to revive their faith

... in the clear practical instructions of the clergyman who had won attention in the polished literary circles of France and the Netherlands as well as in the castles of the English nobility. The little congregation at Rock Creek grew so rapidly that it was soon necessary to prepare a special building, and the erection of St. John’s Church was begun about half a mile from his residence. It was, from all we know, the first Church under the secular clergy established in Maryland, erected by a congregation which supported a pastor—a system common enough to us now, but till then unknown in Maryland, where the Jesuit Fathers had maintained the services of religion at their own expense.<sup>8</sup>

It was at Rock Creek that Charles Carroll’s letter found him. The selection of the two Carrolls shows the foresight of Congress in such a delicate piece of diplomacy.

A *brouillon* of an interesting memorandum by Father Carroll, now in the Baltimore Cathedral Archives, shows that he did not accept the invitation of Congress without weighing well the risk he ran in thus mingling religion with politics. The remarkable part of his acceptance is that he foresaw the futility of the mission to Canada:

The Congress has done me the distinguished and unexpected honour of desiring me to accompany the Committee ordered to Canada and of assisting them in such matters as they shall judge useful. I should betray the confidence put in me by the Honourable Congress, and perhaps disappoint their expectations were I not to open my mind to them with the

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 86.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

utmost sincerity, and plainly tell them how little service they can hope to derive from my assistance. In the first place, the nature and functions of that profession in which I have engaged from a very early period in life, render me, as I humbly conceive, a very unfit person to be employed in a negotiation of so new a kind to me, of which I have neither experience nor systematical knowledge. I hope I may be allowed to add, that though I have very little regard to my personal safety amidst the present distress of my country, yet I cannot help feeling my character; and I have observed that when the ministers of religion, leave the duties of their profession to take a busy part in political matters, they generally fall into contempt, and sometimes even bring discredit to the cause in whose service they are engaged. Secondly—From all the information I have been able to collect concerning the State of Canada, it appears to me that the inhabitants of that country are no wise disposed to molest the United Colonies, or prevent their forces from taking and holding possession of the strong places in that province, or to assist in any manner the British arms. Now if it be proposed that the Canadians should concur with the other colonies any further than by such neutrality, I apprehend that it will not be in my power to advise them to do it. They have not the same motives for taking up arms against England which render the resistance of the other colonies so justifiable. If an oppressive mode of government has been given them it was what some of them chose, and the rest have acquiesced in. Or if they find themselves oppressed they have not yet tried the success of petitions and remonstrances, all of which ought, as I apprehend, to be ineffectual before it can be lawful to have recourse to arms and change of government. Thirdly—Though I were able to bring myself to think (which as objects now appear to me I really cannot) that the Canadians might lawfully take up arms and concur with [*the draft of the letter stops here*].<sup>9</sup>

The Province of Quebec, where most of the Canadians were living, contained about 150,000 Catholics to only some 360 members of the Church of England. Both the Carrolls knew French customs and the French tongue well, owing to their long residence abroad. In the *Instructions* issued to them they were to repair with all convenient dispatch to Canada to make known to the Canadians the wishes and intentions of Congress. Among the clauses of this document was the following:

You are further to declare that we hold sacred the rights of conscience and may promise to the whole people, solemnly in our name, the free and undisturbed exercise of their religion; and, to the clergy, the full, perfect and peaceable possession and enjoyment of all their estates;

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<sup>9</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives. Special C—F.*

That the government of everything relating to their religion and clergy, shall be left entirely in the hands of the good people of that province and such legislature as they shall constitute: provided, however, that all other denominations of Christians be equally entitled to hold offices and enjoy civil privileges and the free exercise of their religion and be totally exempt from the payment of any tythes or taxes for the support of any religion.<sup>10</sup>

These *Instructions* are of similar import to those issued by Washington to Benedict Arnold on September 14, 1775, prior to the Canadian invasion:

. . . You are by every means in your power to endeavour to discover the real sentiments of the Canadians towards our cause . . . You are to endeavour to conciliate the affection of these people . . . convincing them that we come at the request of many of their principal people; not as robbers, or to make war against them, but as friends and supporters of their liberties as well as our own, and to give efficacy to these sentiments, you must carefully inculcate upon the officers and soldiers under your command that not only the good of their country, and their honour, but their safety, depends upon their treatment of these people . . . And as the contempt of the religion of a country, by ridiculing any of its ceremonies, or affronting its ministers or votaries, has ever been deeply resented, you are to be particularly careful to restrain every officer and soldier from such imprudence and folly, and to punish every instance of it. On the other hand, as far as it lies in your power, you are to protect and support the free exercise of the religion of the country, and the undisturbed enjoyment of the rights of conscience in religious matters with your utmost influence and authority.<sup>11</sup>

The two sides of the Canadian situation were thus to be met. Charles Carroll of Carrollton, America's leading Catholic layman, was expected to be received by the leaders of the American party in Canada as a *persona grata*, speaking their language, of their faith, and holding similar political views. Father John Carroll, an ex-Jesuit, was expected to be received by Bishop Briand and the Canadian clergy as one of their own, and he was expected to impress upon the Canadian priests the large-minded tolerance in religious matters which Congress claimed. Unfortunately for all concerned, the cause was lost before the Commissioners and Father Carroll left New York for Canada on April 2, 1776.

<sup>10</sup> GRIFFIN, *Catholics in the American Revolution*, vol. i, p. 267.

<sup>11</sup> FORCE, *American Archives*, Series iii, pp. 765-766.



Ten years before (June 21, 1766) Bishop Briand had taken possession of his see of Quebec, and from that date till his death, he was the staunchest supporter of British rule in Canada.<sup>12</sup> He was prejudiced against the *Bostonnais*, who were spreading infidel and licentious literature among his people; with the Catholic Indians he had little patience, because of their fickleness; he was not in sympathy with the Acadians in the tragedy which fell upon their little land; and with the rebellion in the colonies to the south he was utterly at variance. The presence of the American troops at Quebec under Montgomery and Arnold was bound to arouse the chief shepherd of that city and we have his strident call to the Canadians in his Pastorals of this year (1775-1776).<sup>13</sup> When Carleton fled, Briand remained; and on the anniversary of Arnold's defeat, a *Te Deum* of thanksgiving was given (December 31, 1776).

Bishop Briand's Charge (December 31, 1776) reflects so thoroughly the situation that it is here given in full:

*To the Catholic people of Quebec, Salutation and Benediction in Our Lord Jesus Christ.*

What are to-day your sentiments, Dearly Beloved Brethren, on the happy and glorious event of the 31st December, 1775, of which the anniversary will, in three days from this date, recall the grateful and consoling memory? You looked upon it then as a singular dispensation of Divine Providence, to be remembered and held as a debt of gratitude to the God of armies for all time. This was the language of His Excellency and of all our officers and all our men. With the greatest consolation did we witness on the part of all the generals and faithful defenders of this town manifestations of this sentiment and see them all combine to render homage to the Supreme Being for the Victory of that day. Nor could we, in view of the principles of our holy faith augur otherwise than favourably

<sup>12</sup> GOSSELIN, *L'Église du Canada après la Conquête*, p. 81-165.

<sup>13</sup> TÊTU, *Notices biographiques: Les Evêques de Québec*, pp. 297-355. Quebec, 1889. Briand's Pastorals will be found *ibid.*, pp. 334-343. They are among the important documents of the Revolution. The Canadians were told without any qualifying clauses that the Americans did not wish them well. Their pretended affection was not a fraternal one, but hypocritical and insincere. There was no need for the Canadians to take up arms for a boon which they already possessed. Americans were traitors to their own beliefs on religious freedom in seeking alliance with Canada, "car nulle autre secte n'a persécuté les romains comme celle des Bostonnais; nulle autre n'a outragé les prêtres profané les églises, les reliques des saints comme elle; nulle autre n'a attaqué avec de plus horribles blasphèmes" . . . and so on for a page or two. The Sacraments were henceforth to be refused to all who sided with the American "rebels." Some few Catholics had the courage to resist this disposition of affairs: they lay buried in unconsecrated ground in the cemetery of St. Michel de Bellechase until 1880.

of the event or refrain from hoping from what the Lord really accomplished and what He never fails to perform when men are faithful in rendering to Him due tribute of glory and honour. He consummated His work, and after having amid the shades of night, rescued us by a kind of miracle, or rather by a real miracle from the hands of our enemies, and delivered them into our hands, when they deemed themselves victorious, that God of goodness, against whom neither science, nor wisdom, nor strength, nor craft, nor knavery can prevail, restored to us, and not only to us but to the whole colony, the blessing of liberty.

And here perhaps I should enumerate and set before you in detail all the marvels which the Lord has accomplished in our behalf, in order to convince you that it is your strict duty to give Him thanks and sing His praises: *Cantate Domino canticum novum quia mirabilia fecit*. But you have well weighed and appreciated these wonderful mercies of God, and times beyond number have I been delighted to hear you proclaim it, in accents which faith alone can inspire. It was God and God only, who restored to us H. E. Monsieur Carleton. He it was who covered him with His shadow, who guided his footsteps, and brought him safely back through the network of most vigilant sentinels specially posted at every point of vantage in order to capture him and carry him off; it was God who enabled our illustrious Governor to put courage in every heart, to tranquillize the minds of the people and to reëstablish peace and union in the town. It was God himself who imparted and preserved unanimity and concord amidst a garrison consisting of men of different ranks, characters, interests and religions. It was God who inspired the brave and glorious garrison with the constancy, strength, generosity and attachment to their King and their duty, which enabled them to sustain a long and painful siege during the severity of a Canadian winter. Did you not also recognize a further evidence of the special protection of Divine Providence in the matter of the failure of a fire-ship which would in all probability have reduced to ashes the whole of the lower town? What more need I say? The arrival of help from Europe at a most opportune moment and but a few hours in advance of the assistance which reached the enemy; the terror manifested by the enemy on seeing His Excellency outside of the walls with a small number of men; the affair of Three-Rivers; the precipitate flight of the enemy on the approach of our troops; the victories won on Lake Champlain; was not all this the work of Divine Providence and do not these wonderful mercies call for our gratitude! *Cantate Domino canticum novum quia mirabilia fecit*. Let us then, Dear Brethren, most joyfully chant a hymn of rejoicing and gratitude to our God, who has worked so many wonders in our behalf. Let us sing it; our illustrious Governor, who is of one mind with us in this matter, asks for it. Your brave commanders, under whom you have won so much glory, have asked that it be done and begged of us to chant a solemn Mass, in order to testify before Almighty God by that august sacrifice, in a manner more worthy of Him and in better keeping with their sentiments, to their heartfelt and boundless gratitude.

Wherefore, after having conferred in this matter with the clergy of our episcopal city, we have resolved to celebrate, at or about nine of the clock, on Tuesday next, 31st December, in our Cathedral Church, a solemn Mass in thanksgiving, after which we shall, in Pontifical Robes, chant the *Te Deum*, whereat our clergy secular and regular shall attend. We exhort and nevertheless enjoin upon all the people to attend thereat, in so far as it can be done, in good faith and before God. We should not consider as being exempt from sin those who through ill will or a spirit of criticism and disobedience, and for no other reason absent themselves therefrom. The *Te Deum* is to be followed by Benediction of the most Holy Sacrament, and we grant an indulgence of forty days.

*Given at Quebec, under our hand, the seal of our Arms and the signature of our Secretary, this 29th December, 1776.*

✠ J. O., *Bishop of Quebec.*<sup>14</sup>

The Commission to Canada was ill-timed. We have no record in John Carroll's letter to his mother, dated Montreal, May 1, 1776, of the progress of the negotiations carried on by the Commissioners, but there is no doubt that Bishop Briand and the French clergy paid small attention to Father Carroll's presentation of the American cause. They recalled to him that the Catholic Faith had been proscribed from the very beginning of the colonial period in his country, that the priests were not free to exercise their spiritual mission publicly, and that the conversion of Congress was too short-lived to be taken seriously. He writes to his mother as follows:

We have at length come to the end of our long and tedious journey, after meeting with several delays on account of the impassable condition of the lakes: and it is with a longing desire of measuring back the same ground that I now take up my pen to inform you of my being in good health, thank God, and of wishing you a perfect enjoyment of yours. We came hither the night before last and were received at the landing by General Arnold, and a great body of officers, gentry, &c. and saluted by firing of cannon, and other military honours. Being conducted to the general's house, we were served with a glass of wine, while people were crowding in to pay their compliments, which ceremony being over, we were shown into another apartment, and unexpectedly met in it a large assembly of ladies, most of them French. After drinking tea, and sitting some time, we went to an elegant supper, which was followed with the singing of the ladies, which proved very agreeable, and would have been much more so, if we had not been so much fatigued with our journey.

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<sup>14</sup> *Researches*, vol. xix, pp. 66-69.

The next day was spent in receiving visits, and dining in a large company, with whom we were pressed to sup, but excused ourselves in order to write letters, of which this is one, and will be finished and dated to-morrow morning. I owe you a journal of our adventures from Philadelphia to this place. When we came to Brunswick in the Jersey government, we overtook the Baron de W——, the Prussian general who had left Philadelphia the day before us. Though I had frequently seen him before, yet he was so disguised in furs that I scarce knew him, and never beheld a more laughable object in my life. Like other Prussian officers, he appears to me as a man who knows little of polite life, and yet has picked up so much of it in his passage through France, as to make a most awkward appearance. When we came to New York, it was no more the gay, polite place it used to be esteemed; but was become almost a desert, unless for the troops. The people were expecting a bombardment, and had therefore removed themselves and their effects out of town: and on the other side the troops were working at the fortifications with the utmost activity. After spending some disagreeable days at this place, we proceeded by water up to Albany, about 160 miles. At our arrival there, we were met by General Schuyler, and entertained by him, during our stay with great politeness and very genteelly. I wrote to you before, of our agreeable situation at Saratoga, and of our journey from thence over lake George to Ticonderoga: from this latter place we embarked on the great lake of Champlain, about 140 miles to St. John. We had a passage of three days and a half. We always came to in the night time. Passengers generally encamp in the woods, making a covering of the boughs of trees, and large fires at their feet. But as we had a good awning to our boat, and had brought with us good beds, and plenty of bed clothes, I chose to sleep on board.<sup>15</sup>

When the American Commissioners arrived in Montreal on April 29, 1776, Father Carroll presented a letter of introduction from Father Farmer, of Philadelphia, to Father Pierre Floquet, an ex-Jesuit, the last of the Canadian superiors of that Mission. Father Carroll was permitted to say Mass in Floquet's house, though the latter was then in disgrace with Bishop Briand, on account of his favorable attitude towards the American cause. In June, 1776, after John Carroll's departure, Father Floquet was suspended *a divinis* by Bishop Briand, on account of his "*Bostonnais* heart." Floquet, in his own defense (June 15,

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<sup>15</sup> BRENT, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-43. The *Journal* of Charles Carroll of Carrollton (ROWLAND, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 363-400) contains little of interest; it is a nondescript account of the trials of the journey to Montreal and return. The journey north was ended on April 29, 1776, and the only reference to Father Carroll is the note that on July 12th, he set out from Montreal to join Dr. Franklin at St. John's.



1776), protested that permission was given to Carroll by Monsignor Montgolfier, the vicar-general, and that Carroll did not reside with him, and dined with him but once. But Floquet had disobeyed Briand's order that no courtesy should be shown the American priest, and he suffered accordingly. In November, 1776, Floquet submitted to the episcopal condemnation and was reinstated. He died the following year, the last of the Canadian Jesuits.<sup>16</sup> Shea says that the American priest received scant hospitality, even from the ex-Jesuits, and "found himself, when coming to portray the toleration of his countrymen, confronted by the Rev. John McKenna, the victim of their bigotry."<sup>17</sup>

John Carroll found it beyond his honesty to explain the bigotry in the *Address to the People of Great Britain* and in the *Petition to the King*, of October, 1774, and still more difficult was it to deny the Congress a sublime hypocrisy in stating the opposite opinion in its *Address to the Inhabitants of Quebec*.

The Mission to Canada began on April 2, 1776, and ended when Chase and Charles Carroll reached Philadelphia, on June 11, 1776. Franklin in a letter, dated New York, May 27, 1776, pays a high tribute of praise to Father Carroll for his attention during the journey—"As to myself, I find I grow daily more feeble and think I could hardly have got so far but for Mr. Carroll's friendly assistance and tender care of me."<sup>18</sup> On June 2, 1776, Father Carroll wrote from Philadelphia to Charles Carroll, senior, giving him news of his son, and on the general failure of the Mission:

Cousin Charles and Mr. Chase left Montreal with me on the 12th of May, that they might not be in any danger from a frigate running up

<sup>16</sup> *Researches*, vol. xxiii, pp. 299-300.

<sup>17</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 151-152. Cf. GRIFFIN, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 135-153 (*The Catholic Loyalist Highlanders of the Mohawk Valley*). TÊTU, (*op. cit.*, p. 333) says: "On rappela à M. Carroll que la religion catholique n'avait encore jamais été tolérée dans telles et telles des provinces insurgées; que les prêtres en étaient exclus sous des peines très sévères et que les missionnaires envoyés chez les Sauvages étaient traités avec rigueur et cruauté. On lui demanda aussi pourquoi le congrès, qu'il disait si bien disposé envers les catholiques, avait fortement protesté à Londres contre la religion romaine et contre les avantages qu'on lui accordait en Canada . . . les gens instruits se rappelaient encore des cruautés inouïes et des perfidies sans nombre exercées par les Américains envers la nation Acadienne, tache indélébile . . ."

<sup>18</sup> *Works*, Sparks ed., vol. vii, p. 183.



the river, and getting between them and the eastern shore of St. Lawrence. As Doctor Franklin determined to return to Philadelphia on account of his health, I resolved to accompany him, seeing it was out of my power to be of any service after the Commissioners had thought it advisable for them to leave Montreal. Your son and Mr. Chase proposed staying at St. John's or in that neighborhood, till they should know whether our army would keep post at De Chambeau; and the former desired me to give you notice of his being safe and well. . . . When I left him he expected to follow us in a few days; but Mr. Hancock tells me that if an express sent some days since from Congress reaches them before they have left Canada, he is of the opinion they will continue there for some time. I shall set out from hence, next week and propose doing myself the pleasure of calling at Elkridge. My affectionate and respectful compliments to Mrs. Darnall and Carroll, with love to Polly. Nothing new from Canada, nor indeed any advices at all since we left it. Great divisions here between the contending parties. . . . Ten tons of powder, five hundred small arms came in yesterday. Cousin Charles received large packets of letters from you a few days before we left Montreal.<sup>19</sup>

Congress soon learned that the popular American attitude towards the Canadians was well known; and while every effort was made in Instructions and otherwise to dull the effect of the unfortunate passage in the *Address to the People of Great Britain*, it was realized in Philadelphia that there was little hope of winning the Canadians to the cause of American freedom. "It is difficult," writes Russell, "to understand how the people of the American colonies could have imagined it possible to win over Canada to a union with them against Great Britain, when at every turn they outraged her people on what was dearer to them than life."<sup>20</sup>

Father Carroll returned to Rock Creek in the summer of 1776 and took up again the work of his ministry.

From this period until some years after the termination of the Revolutionary war, he was principally employed in the service of the several congregations before spoken of, which he may be said in a great measure to have formed, alternately and periodically visiting and instructing them in the exalted duties of Christianity, and enforcing the principles of piety and charity, which he taught and inculcated, by his own persuasive example; and in directing and regulating the concerns of his respected

<sup>19</sup> Cited by ROWLAND, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 170-171.

<sup>20</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 499.

mother's property—whilst he contributed in an eminent degree, by his respectful and affectionate demeanour towards her, by his kindness and attention to all others, and by the irresistible charm of his conversation, company, and manners, to impart to the family circle of her house the highest degree of interest and to secure to it the fullest share of domestic happiness. He availed himself of all the moments left from the above employment, and from the time devoted to acts of private devotion, for which, under all circumstances, he always set apart a large portion, to add to the abundant stock of information which he already possessed, such as could be derived from a review of ancient literature, and a close and regular inspection of the public journals, miscellanies and literary works of the day, and to reciprocate, as he always did, with peculiar grace and kindness, all the offices of friendly and liberal intercourse with a large and respectable society.<sup>21</sup>

From this time until he took up the challenge of the Rev. Charles Wharton in 1784, we hear very little about him. The war had hindered his correspondence with his old friends of Bruges, and with many others who were then in England. In an undated letter at this time, as given by Brent, he says to Father Charles Plowden, with whom he corresponded regularly until his death: "If your other kind letters never came to hand, you have only to blame the unsleeping avidity of your own cruisers, whom I should call pirates, were I inclined to follow your example of abusing the political measures of our adversaries."<sup>22</sup> Hughes records during this period (1776-1784) several letters to Plowden, one dated April 27, 1780, and another, which has an important place in the documentary material for the next period of his life, dated Maryland, February 20, 1782. The loss of Carroll's correspondence is much to be deplored, for it would be of infinite value to us to know how the setbacks and the successes of the Revolutionary Army had affected him. What few letters we do possess are beyond criticism for their wholehearted sympathy with the Revolution. From the close of the war his letters to Plowden began to grow more frequent, and they will be of eminent service in helping us to understand the situation of the clergy and the people at the time of his appointment as prefect-apostolic (June 9, 1784).

<sup>21</sup> BRENT, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45. The Carroll-Plowden correspondence from which so many details of Carroll's life are drawn for this work, is mainly in the *Stonyhurst* and *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE DAWN OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN THE UNITED STATES

(1776-1787)

One further topic needs to be discussed as part of the background to John Carroll's five years as superior of the Church in the new Republic (1784-1789); it is the lessening and gradual extinction of legal disabilities for Americans of Catholic faith. "With the dawn of the Revolution all the colonies were substantially ready for the adoption of measures, which should make the severance of Church from State complete. Though each had gone through an experience peculiar to itself, in some instances presenting marked contrast to the others, all were practically together in a general desire for a religious liberty entirely untrammelled by the civil law, in which the terms *Conformity* and *Dissent* would become forever inapplicable."<sup>1</sup> The effort by the First Continental Congress to enlist the Canadians in 1774-76 and the alliance with France had had a considerable effect upon the leaders in the Revolution. Congress had adopted Dickinson's address in which "all the old religious jealousies were condemned as low-minded infirmities."<sup>2</sup> This gave the tone to the religious aspect of the post-Revolutionary period; and it was a foregone conclusion that when the Constitution should be written, the principle of religious liberty, or to put it more accurately, disestablishment, would find a prominent place in its clauses.

The third anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1779, found the President and members of the Continental Congress invited to attend a *Te Deum* service at St. Mary's Church, Philadelphia. The invitations were sent out by Gerard, the French Minister, and Father Seraphim Bandol, chaplain of the French legation, preached the following sermon:

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<sup>1</sup> COBB, *op. cit.*, p. 482.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 490.

Gentlemen:—We are assembled to celebrate the anniversary of that day which Providence had marked in his Eternal Decrees to become the epoch of liberty and independence to the thirteen United States of America. That Being, whose Almighty hand holds all existence beneath its dominion, undoubtedly produces in the depths of His wisdom, those great events which astonish the universe, and of which the most presumptuous, though instrumental in accomplishing them, dare not attribute to themselves the merit. But the finger of God is still more peculiarly evident in that happy, that glorious revolution, which calls forth this day's festivity. He hath struck the oppressors of a people free and peaceable, with the spirit of delusion which renders the wicked artificers of their own proper misfortunes. Permit me, my dear brethren, citizens of the United States, to address you on this occasion. It is that God, that all-powerful God who hath directed your steps, when you knew not where to apply for counsel; who, when you were without arms, fought for you with the sword of Justice; who, when you were in adversity, poured into your hearts the spirit of courage, of wisdom, and of fortitude, and who hath at length raised up for your support a youthful sovereign, whose virtues bless and adorn a sensible, a faithful, and a generous nation. This nation has blended her interests with your interests, and her sentiments with yours. She participates in all your joys, and this day unites her voice to yours, at the foot of the altar of the Eternal God, to celebrate that glorious revolution, which has placed the sons of America among the free and independent nations of the earth.

We have nothing now to apprehend but the anger of Heaven, or that the measure of our guilt should exceed His mercy. Let us then prostrate ourselves at the feet of the immortal God who holds the fate of empires in His hands and raises them up at His pleasure, or breaks them down to dust. Let us conjure Him to enlighten our enemies, and to dispose their hearts to enjoy that tranquillity and happiness which the revolution we now celebrate has established for a great part of the human race. Let us implore Him to conduct us by that way which His Providence has marked out for a union at so desirable an end. Let us offer unto Him hearts imbued with sentiments of respect, consecrated by religion, by humanity, and by patriotism. Never is the august ministry of His altar more acceptable to His Divine Majesty than when it lays at His feet homages, offerings and vows, so pure, so worthy of the common parent of mankind. God will not reject our joy, for He is the author of it; nor will He reject our prayers, for they ask but the full accomplishment of the decrees He hath manifested. Filled with this spirit let us, in concert with each other, raise our hearts to the Eternal. Let us implore His infinite mercy to be pleased to inspire the rulers of both nations with the wisdom and force necessary to perfect what it hath begun. Let us, in a word, unite our voices to beseech Him to dispense His blessings upon the councils and the arms of the allies, and that we may soon enjoy the sweets of peace which will cement the union, and establish the prosperity of the two empires. It is with this view that

we shall cause that canticle to be performed which the custom of the Catholic Church hath consecrated to be at once a testimonial of public joy, a thanksgiving for benefits received from Heaven, and a prayer for the continuance of its mercies.<sup>3</sup>

Members of the Congress attended the solemn Requiem Mass for the repose of the soul of the Spanish Agent, Don Juan de Miralles, at St. Joseph's Church, Philadelphia, on May 8, 1780.<sup>4</sup> Again, after the victory over Cornwallis at Yorktown, the members of Congress, the Supreme Executive Council, and the Assembly of Pennsylvania, were invited to attend a service of thanksgiving at St. Mary's Church on November 4, 1781. The sermon again was delivered by Father Bandol:

Gentlemen:—A numerous people assembled to render thanks to the Almighty for His mercies, is one of the most affecting objects, and worthy the attention of the Supreme Being. While camps resound with triumphal acclamations, while nations rejoice in victory and glory, the most honourable office a minister of the altar can fill, is to be the organ by which public gratitude is conveyed to the Omnipotent.

Those miracles which He once wrought for His chosen people are renewed in our favour; and it would be equally ungrateful and impious not to acknowledge that the event which lately confounded our enemies and frustrated their designs was the wonderful work of that God who guards your liberties.

And who but He could so combine the circumstances which led to success? We have seen our enemies push forward amid perils almost innumerable, amid obstacles almost insurmountable, to the spot which was designed to witness their disgrace; yet they eagerly sought it as their theatre of triumph!

Blind as they were, they bore hunger, thirst, and inclement skies, poured their blood in battle against brave republicans, and crossed immense regions to confine themselves in another Jericho, whose walls were fated to fall before another Joshua. It is He, whose voice commands the winds, the seas and the seasons, who formed a junction on the same day, in the same hour, between a formidable fleet from the south and an army rushing from the north, like an impetuous torrent. Who but He, in whose hands are the hearts of men, could inspire the allied troops with the friendships, the confidence, the tenderness of brothers? How is it that two nations once divided, jealous, inimical, and nursed in reciprocal prejudices, are now become so closely united, as to form but one?

<sup>3</sup> *Researches*, vol. vi, pp. 56-59; a fac-simile of the printed sermon from the Ridgway Library, Philadelphia, will be found in SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 171-174; cf. WESTCOTT, *History of Philadelphia*, p. 365.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Washington's *Writings*, vol. vi, pp. 186-187; cf. *Researches*, vol. vi, pp. 62-72.



Worldlings would say, it is the wisdom, the virtue, and moderation of their chiefs, it is a great national interest which has performed this prodigy. They will say, that to the skill of the generals, to the courage of the troops, to the activity of the whole army, we must attribute this splendid success. Ah! they are ignorant, that the combining of so many fortunate circumstances, is an emanation from the All-Perfect Mind: that courage, that skill, that activity, bear the sacred impression of Him Who is divine.

For how many favours have we not to thank Him during the course of the present year? Your union, which was at first supported by justice alone, has been consolidated by your courage, and the knot which ties you together is become indissoluble by the accession of all the states and the unanimous voice of all the confederates. You present to the universe the noble sight of a society, which, founded in equality and justice, secures to the individuals who compose it, the utmost happiness which can be derived from human institutions. This advantage, which so many other nations have been unable to procure, even after ages of efforts and misery, is granted by divine providence to the United States; and His adorable decrees have marked the present moment for the completion of that memorable happy revolution, which has taken place in this extensive continent. While your counsels were thus acquiring new energy, rapid multiplied successes have crowned your arms in the southern states.

We have seen the unfortunate citizens of these states forced from their peaceful abodes; after a long and cruel captivity, old men, women and children, thrown without mercy, into a foreign country. Master of their lands and their slaves, amid his temporary affluence, a proud victor rejoiced in their distresses. But Philadelphia has witnessed their patience and fortitude; they have found here another home, and though driven from their native soil they have blessed God, that He has delivered them from their presence, and conducted them to a country where every just and feeling man has stretched out the helping hand of benevolence. Heaven rewards their virtues. Three large states are at once wrested from their foe. The rapacious soldier has been compelled to take refuge behind his ramparts, and oppression has vanished like those phantoms which are dissipated by the morning ray.

On this solemn occasion, we might renew our thanks to the God of battles, for the success He has granted to the arms of your allies and your friends by land and by sea, through the other parts of the globe. But let us not recall those events which too clearly prove how much the hearts of our enemies have been obdurate. Let us prostrate ourselves at the altar, and implore the God of mercy to suspend His vengeance, to spare them in His wrath, to inspire them with sentiments of justice and moderation that your victories be followed by peace and tranquillity. Let us beseech Him to continue to shed on the counsels of the king, your ally, that spirit of wisdom, of justice, and of courage, which has rendered his reign so glorious. Let us entreat Him to maintain in each

of the states that intelligence by which the United States are inspired. Let us return Him thanks that a faction, whose rebellion He has corrected, now deprived of support, is annihilated. Let us offer Him pure hearts, unsoiled by private hatred or public dissention, and let us, with one will and one voice, pour forth to the Lord that hymn of praise by which Christians celebrate their gratitude and his glory.<sup>5</sup>

These acts of courtesy must not, however, be interpreted by the Catholic reader as a portion of his history alone. Congress looked upon religious disabilities in the new Republic from quite another angle than did the Catholic Church. From the outset the distinction between federal jurisdiction in the matter of Church Establishment and State rights on the question was administered and applied. John Carroll, as early as 1779, expressed this view to Father Plowden:

You inquire how congress intend to treat the Catholics in this country. To this I must answer you that congress have no authority or jurisdiction relative to the internal government, or concerns of the particular states of the Union; these are all settled by the constitutions and laws of the states themselves. I am glad, however, to inform you that the fullest and largest system of toleration is adopted in almost all the American states; public protection and encouragement are extended alike to all denominations, and Roman Catholics are members of congress, assemblies, and hold civil and military posts, as well as others. For the sake of your and many other families, I am heartily glad to see the same policy beginning to be adopted in England and Ireland; and I cannot help thinking that you are indebted to America for this piece of service. I hope it will soon be extended as far with you as with us.<sup>6</sup>

The dawn of religious freedom in the new Republic had at last come, although "establishment" was passionately advocated in some of the state conventions; but the new spirit of equality was sufficiently strong to forbid its continuance. Madison added a new and valuable light on the question when he declared that religion did not enter within the cognizance of Government, and the federal spirit was seen when the Ordinance of 1787

<sup>5</sup> *Researches*, vol. vi, pp. 73-76; the sermon was printed in the *American Museum*, (vol. iv, July, 1788), pp. 28-29; cf. SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 198-201. The statement often made by Catholic historians that Washington, Rochambeau, Lafayette and De Grasse were present at this ceremony is erroneous; they did not leave Yorktown until Nov. 5, 1781.

<sup>6</sup> Rock Creek, February 28, 1779, in the *United States Catholic Miscellany*, vol. iii (1844), pp. 367-368.

extended religious liberty to the Northwest Territory.<sup>7</sup> "In none of the other States," says Cobb, "was there such various and sustained discussion as in Virginia. In most of them a few words of constitutional provision, with more or less freedom, settled the question for the time. What is most marked by the comparison of the different actions is the varying degree of ability to understand the true nature of religious freedom. No other colony, save Rhode Island, equalled Virginia's broad and comprehensive statement, while some of them fell far short of that standard."<sup>8</sup> New Hampshire discriminated in favour of the Protestant religion. Massachusetts gave a civil status to the Church preferred by the several towns and parishes. New York granted a free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, though Catholics were not at first included in this freedom. New Jersey barred Catholics from holding office in the State. Pennsylvania and Delaware laid emphasis on belief in Christian doctrines. Maryland limited its religious freedom to Christians. North Carolina excluded Catholics from all offices and places of trust. South Carolina established the Protestant religion. Georgia barred Catholics from its legislature. These restrictions, however, are a sign of progress towards the final action of Congress in 1787. Cobb sums up the situation in the following paragraph:

It will thus be observed that, when the American Union was formed, there was great variety of legal expression on the subject of religion and its civic relations in the different states. By brief grouping of them it appears that in only two out of the thirteen was full and perfect freedom conceded by law. These were Rhode Island and Virginia. Six of the states, *viz.* New Hampshire, Connecticut, New Jersey, the two Carolinas, and Georgia, insisted on Protestantism. Two were content with the Christian religion: Delaware and Maryland. Four, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and the Carolinas, required assent to the divine inspiration of the Bible. Two, Pennsylvania and South Carolina, demanded a belief in heaven and hell. Three, New York, Maryland, and South Carolina, excluded ministers from civil office. Two, Pennsylvania and South Carolina, emphasized belief in one eternal God. One, Delaware, required assent to the doctrine of the Trinity. And five, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maryland and South Carolina, adhered to a religious

<sup>7</sup> McLAUGHLIN, *The Confederation and the Constitution*, p. 121. New York, 1905.

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 489.

establishment. In one, South Carolina, the obnoxious term *toleration* found a constitutional place.<sup>9</sup>

This phase of American Catholic life has gathered many legends in the passage of time; chief among these is the statement, which no amount of denying seems to affect, that Father John Carroll was directly instrumental in bringing about the great triumph of religious equality before the law. It is claimed that John Carroll was the personal and intimate friend of George Washington, and that this friendship was strengthened through Carroll's success in obtaining the powerful influence of France for the American cause. It is also said that as a result of Carroll's personal appeal to Washington, the last lingering doubts about Catholic loyalty vanished and the sun of religious liberty arose in the land. There is no ground for these claims. That Carroll was known to the leaders of the Constitutional Congress is possible, since his controversy with Wharton (1785) had been favourably commented upon; but any claim for him in the organization of the Republic or in the drafting of the Constitution is erroneous.<sup>10</sup> The provenance of these legends about John Carroll and the Fathers of the Republic is not difficult to find. Letters had appeared during the year 1786-87 in the *Columbian Magazine* (Philadelphia), from correspondents who objected to the extension of religious liberty to Catholics. Mathew Carey, the celebrated publisher of Philadelphia, was one of the proprietors of this periodical, but withdrew from the enterprise in 1787, because of the bias it displayed against his

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 507.

<sup>10</sup> CRÉTINEAU-JOLY in the *History of the Society of Jesus* attributes to the "learning and foresight" of Father Carroll the "establishment of the principle of religious independence," and asserts that the framers of the Constitution called him into counsel before they submitted that document to the Congress. In his Appendix to DARRAS, *General History of the Church*, the Rev. Dr. White represents the First Amendment as having been adopted on the petition of a group of distinguished Catholics, headed by John Carroll, and quotes as his authority, Bishop Fenwick. As is well known, the First Amendment was never before the Federal Convention, having been submitted to the States in September, 1789. Dr. Brownson [*Brownson's Review*, vol. iii (October, 1845), p. 506], says: "When the disclaimer [to all right to touch the empire of conscience] was inserted in the Constitution, Catholicity was looked upon as dead; there were few Catholics, comparatively speaking, in the country, and nobody dreamed of the possibility of their becoming numerous. The Protestants feeling themselves strong, thought they might afford to be liberal. Perhaps the recent struggles for political independence had, for the moment, humanized their feelings, and in the sudden expansion of their hearts, they really imagined it might be a fine thing to try the experiment of religious liberty. Yet the acknowledgment of religious liberty was not obtained without strong opposition."



Faith. He began in January, 1787, the publication of the *American Museum*, the seventh volume of which (1790) was dedicated to Bishop Carroll "as a mark of sincere esteem for his numerous amicable qualities and his distinguished virtues, and of gratitude for his friendship." In one of the summer issues (1787) of the *Columbian Magazine* there appeared an attack on the Catholic Faith which Carroll felt obliged to answer. This answer was written in September, 1787, and appeared in a supplement to the December, 1787, number of that periodical, but with "unjustifiable retrenchment" as Carroll wrote to Carey on January 30, 1789. Carroll's letter was as follows:

To the Editor of the *Columbian Magazine*.

Sir:—

One of your correspondents sends you a fabricated history of a Cardinal Turlone, who never existed, and which you inserted in a former *Magazine*; this history he enriched with inflammatory comments; but he had neither justice nor candour enough to undeceive your readers by informing them that the whole was a malicious fable. A very small part of your Monthly Miscellany is devoted to the article of news; for this you are commendable; we can readily refer to other collections for that commodity. But when you condescend to relate events of modern times, you might, once in a month, make selection of a few articles of undoubted credit and general importance, and not deal out the malicious and mischief-making forgeries of persecuting Europeans. Thanks to genuine spirit and Christianity, the United States have banished intolerance from their system of government, and many of them have done the justice to every denomination of Christians, which ought to be done to them in all, of placing them on the same footing of citizenship, and conferring an equal right of participation in national privileges. Freedom and independence, acquired by the united efforts, and cemented with the mingled blood of Protestant and Catholic fellow-citizens, should be equally enjoyed by all. The Jersey state was the first, which, in forming her new Constitution, gave the unjust example of reserving to Protestants alone the prerogatives of government and legislation. At that very time the American army swarmed with Roman-Catholic soldiers, and the world would have held them justified, had they withdrawn themselves from the defence of a State which treated them with so much cruelty and injustice, and which they then covered from the depredations of the British army. But their patriotism was too disinterested to hearken to the first impulse of even just resentment. They could not believe that the State, which was foremost to injure them, would continue, or that any others would imitate, her partial and iniquitous policy. It seems they were not acquainted with the bitter spirit which dictated the unjustifiable exclusion: they trusted to the wise and generous sentiments which



pervaded every corner of the American continent. For who that remembers our cordial unanimity in rejecting the claims of foreign oppression, could imagine that any of us would impose on fellow-soldiers and citizens the degrading mark of distrust, or the galling yoke of inferiority? Such, however, was the treatment they found, not because they were less warm or less profuse of their blood in defence of their common rights, but because the authors of injustice, who could resent and oppose British counsels levelled against their own rights of legislation, wanted the greater fortitude of emancipating their minds from the slavish subjection to the prejudices imbibed during a narrowed British education.<sup>11</sup>

In his letter (Jan. 30, 1789) to Mathew Carey, Bishop Carroll says: "*After having contributed in proportion to their numbers, equally at least with every other denomination, to the establishment of independence, and run every risk in common with them, it is not only contradictory to the avowed principles of equality in religious rights but a flagrant act of injustice to deprive them of those advantages to the acquirement of which they so much contributed.*"<sup>12</sup> No doubt from the simultaneous appearance of Carroll's letter in the *Magazine* with the debates on the Federal Constitution, the idea arose that John Carroll had entered into the discussions on the Sixth Article and on the First Amendment of the Constitution. Father John Carroll's brother Daniel was a member of the Constitutional Congress and took a leading part in the debates on religious freedom in that body. That he may have been guided by Father Carroll is probable, but beyond this it would be difficult to prove any active participation by the first Bishop of Baltimore.<sup>13</sup>

The Sixth Article of the Constitution submitted to the States in 1787 reads: *No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States.* In some of the State Conventions this Article was considered insufficient; in others it was considered dangerous to the welfare of the state commonwealth. Major Lusk, in Massachusetts, dreaded the liberty granted to those who were not Protestants, and "shuddered at the idea that Roman Catholics, Papists, and

<sup>11</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Special A—G2; cf. *Researches*, vol. xv, pp. 62-63.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. THORPE, *The Constitutional History of the United States*, vol. ii, pp. 2375s., Chicago, 1901; TAYLOR, *Origin and Growth of the American Constitution* (New York, 1911); *Journal of the Federal Convention*, Rept. by Madison, edited by E. H. Scott (New York, 1908).

Pagans might be introduced into office and that Popery and the Inquisition may be established in America." The first of the ten Amendments submitted in 1789-91 went a step further in granting religious equality—*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion*. It would take us too far afield to follow the story of the final adoption of this First Amendment in the thirteen state legislatures. The Constitutional Congress had done all it could to ordain liberty of conscience throughout the land, but years were to pass before all the States were to accept the principle of complete religious freedom. Some of the dates are significant: Massachusetts (1833); Connecticut (1818); New York (1806); New Jersey (1844); Delaware (1831); Virginia (1830); North Carolina (1835); South Carolina (1790), and Georgia (1798). New Hampshire still retains the word *Protestant* in its religious clause and several efforts to eliminate it or change it have thus far failed.<sup>14</sup> The grave problem of the absence of power on the part of the national government to prevent state established churches need not be entered into here. Whether written into the law or not, Christianity is the law of the land. The Catholic Church in the United States was, indeed, never to be without certain misgivings; for, from the days of John Jay's bigotry down to the last of the anti-Catholic movements which have been begun during the past one hundred and forty years, there has ever been present in American life, especially in political crises, the old antagonisms of pre-Revolutionary days.

<sup>14</sup> DE COURCY-SHEA, *The Catholic Church in the United States*, pp. 45-46. New York, 1856. BRENT, (*op. cit.*, pp. 68-69) quotes from a contemporary manuscript, presumably Carroll's, which gives the following reasons for the adoption of the principle of freedom of conscience:

I. The leading characters of the first assembly or congress, were, through principle, opposed to every thing like vexation on the score of religion; and as they were perfectly acquainted with the maxim of the Catholics, they saw the injustice of persecuting them for adhering to their doctrines.

II. The Catholics evinced a desire, not less ardent than that of the Protestants, to render the provinces independent of the mother country: and it was manifest that if they joined the common cause and exposed themselves to the common danger, they should be entitled to a participation in the common blessings which crowned their efforts.

III. France was negotiating an alliance with the United Provinces; and nothing could have retarded the progress of that alliance more effectually, than the demonstration of any ill will against the religion which France professed.

IV. The aid, or at least the neutrality of Canada, was judged necessary for the success of the enterprise of the provinces, and by placing the Catholics on a level with all other Christians, the Canadians, it was believed, could not but be favourably disposed towards the revolution.

CHAPTER IX  
THE CARROLL-WHARTON CONTROVERSY

(1784-85)

It is the first of these post-Revolutionary attacks upon the Church which has now to be chronicled—the controversy between the first American apostate priest, Rev. Charles Wharton, and Father John Carroll. Charles Wharton was born in St. Mary's County, Maryland, in 1748. He was educated at St. Omer's, entered the Society of Jesus and finished his studies at Bruges and Liège, being ordained a priest on September 19, 1772. In July, 1773, he was appointed professor of mathematics in the English College at Liège, and when the Society was suppressed, he took refuge in England. Four years later he became permanent chaplain to the Catholics of Worcester, England. Wharton wrote about this time a *Poetical Epistle to George Washington*, which had considerable vogue. It was first published at Annapolis in 1778, and reprinted in London in 1780, being sold for the benefit "of some hundreds of American prisoners now suffering confinement in the jails of England."<sup>1</sup> The concluding lines of the *Poetical Epistle* are as follows:

Great without pomp, without ambition brave,  
Proud, not to conquer fellow-men, but save;  
Friend to the weak, to none a foe but those  
Who plan their greatness on their brethren's woes;  
Awed by no titles, faithless to no trust.  
Free without faction, obstinately just;  
Warmed by Religion's pure heavenly ray,  
That points to future bliss the certain way,—  
Such be my country! What her sons should be  
O, may they learn, great Washington, from thee!<sup>2</sup>

Wharton's gifts were of a high order, but his private life does not seem to have been free from blame. Rumours which

<sup>1</sup> WINSOR, *Narrative and Critical History of America*, vol. vi, pp. 575.

<sup>2</sup> *Researches*, vol. vi, p. 24.

were detrimental to his standing in the ministry were circulated in Worcester, and from letters which are extant, it would appear that a change in his religious opinions occurred at this time. "He has told me," writes his friend and biographer, Bishop Doane of New Jersey, "that the mental suffering which he then underwent was keen and severe, beyond the power of description or conception. It preyed upon a frame enfeebled and exhausted by vigils and study, with a spiritual excruciation of which the rack of the inquisition was but a feeble emblem. It may be doubted whether his nervous system ever recovered from the shock. In such a struggle, nature, unassisted, must have failed and fallen."<sup>3</sup> Father Wharton's faith had been unsettled for a long time before his apostasy. In a letter from a friend in America (July 25, 1782) we learn that his *Letter to the Roman Catholics of the City of Worcester* announcing his defection was then in preparation. Wharton returned to Maryland in June, 1783, lived on his own estate there, and for a year gave no evidence of priestly zeal or of the decision he had made to leave the Church. Soon after his arrival he called upon Father Carroll, as we learn from a letter Carroll sent to Plowden, September 26, 1783:

Since my last to you, Messrs. Leonard Neale, from Demarara, and Ch. Wharton have come into this country. I have seen the latter only once, and propose returning his visit in about a fortnight. I find him indeed possessed of considerable knowledge, and endowed with all those talents which render society agreeable. If upon further acquaintance I discover any of those blemishes which some of his companions in England thought they did, it would give me great concern, and I should speak freely to him about them. He has surely too much knowledge, and is too well grounded in sound philosophy and sacred literature to adopt the incoherent and impious principles of modern infidelity.<sup>4</sup>

Father Plowden did not lose sight of Wharton and in a letter written towards the close of the year 1783, he again inquires about him. In a reply, dated April 10, 1784, Carroll tells his English correspondent that Wharton had returned to America

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<sup>3</sup> DOANE, *The Remains of the Rev. Charles Henry Wharton, D.D., with a Memoir of His Life*, vol. i, pp. 27-28. Philadelphia, 1834.

<sup>4</sup> HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, pp. 615-616. Cf. *United States Catholic Miscellany*, vol. iii, p. 662.

and was then living on his own estate about sixty miles away from Rock Creek. Carroll notes the fact that he did not bring any faculties from the London Vicar-Apostolic, and therefore did not exercise the ministry in the Maryland mission. This was not surprising for it was in line with Bishop Talbot's policy to refuse such faculties. Carroll says in his letter that Wharton was leading "a life clear of all offense," and that he was giving "no handle to censure, though they are not wanting who would be glad to find room for it."<sup>5</sup> Wharton's conduct at Worcester had given Plowden cause "to apprehend some flagrant abuse of the talents with which God has distinguished him;" it was rumoured in London in September, 1784, that he had given up the Faith. That Wharton had decided to leave the Church before setting out for America is evident from the materials used in his *Letter*. The wealth of knowledge he displays in his attack on Catholic doctrine proves, as Carroll says, in his answer, that his authorities were "collected on the other side with great industry. By the Chaplain's own account, he has long meditated a separation from us; and during that time, he had opportunities of resorting to the repositories of science so common and convenient in Europe."<sup>6</sup>

In May, 1784, Wharton visited Philadelphia to give his *Letter to the Roman Catholics of the City of Worcester* to the printer. Dr. White, Episcopal Bishop of Philadelphia, read the manuscript and was much pleased with it.<sup>7</sup> The publication of the *Letter* aroused a strong spirit of hostility to the Church in Pennsylvania and Maryland, and the clergy saw that an answer was necessary.

Although attacks upon the Catholic Religion had often been made while this country was under British domination, and while Catholics were a proscribed class, yet their coarseness, and the ferocity of their authors, made them unworthy of a formal defensive argument. But Mr. Wharton's pamphlet was a production of a very different character. Written in a style of polished elegance, and professing to be rather an apology or justification for the author's departure from among brethren whom he respected and loved, than an attempt to convict them of error, it nevertheless assailed the distinctive doctrines of the Catholic church in

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 662.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 663 (Plowden to Carroll, September 2, 1784).

<sup>7</sup> DOANE, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 86.



detail, with elaborate arguments, deriving force from the author's former profession and acknowledged learning, and calculated to produce a deeper impression by the absence of harsh invective, by the terms of respect and gratitude in which he alluded to the virtues and attentions of his Catholic acquaintances, as well as by his affected deference to their feelings and prejudices. . . . His frequent references to authors rarely to be found in this country at that period, and only intelligible to the profound scholar, were calculated to embarrass the unlearned inquirer, and give temporary impunity to assertions subsequently shown to be only sustained by erroneous quotations or doubtful authorities. The time at which the attack upon Catholic doctrines was made seemed to indicate an unfriendliness to that spirit of religious liberty which was then cherished by patriots, who, having just succeeded in emancipating their country from foreign control, were desirous to exhibit in the new Republic the delightful spectacle of a fraternity in all civil and religious rights and privileges, without regard to the diversity of speculative opinions, or the variety of religious profession and practice.<sup>8</sup>

The situation was a pathetic one for the little band of devoted priests in Pennsylvania and Maryland. Carroll was among the youngest of them, but his education and his long years of teaching made him easily the leader among his fellows, and it was natural for them to look to him for a fitting reply. On August 4, 1784, Father Molyneux wrote to Carroll inviting him to come to Philadelphia and prepare his reply. "I have a snug chamber to rest you in, and a library well fitted up in the choir of the old chapel and partitioned off from the same, where you might spend many agreeable hours in study and application, free from noise."<sup>9</sup> We are given a glimpse of Carroll's difficulty in obtaining books in his correspondence with Molyneux, asking for certain authors and for verifications of many of the quotations in Wharton's *Letter*. Molyneux' letter of August 24, 1784, gives us a fair idea of the disadvantage he laboured under; for, the best library in Philadelphia was that of James Logan, and after repeated requests, Molyneux was informed that he could have access to the books in the Logan library only when he, Logan, or his brother, was present to watch him.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile Father Carroll's attention was called to the valuable public library at Annapolis, and it was here that he composed the

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<sup>8</sup> *United States Catholic Miscellany*, vol. iii, p. 663.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. *Researches*, vol. v, p. 40.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. vi, pp. 25-26.

greater part of his reply, which is entitled: *Address to the Roman Catholics of the United States of America*. It was published at Annapolis by the printer, Frederick Green, in the autumn of 1784.

Wharton's *Letter* is undoubtedly an example of the best controversial literature of the day, and his attack rises far above the apologetic used in the previous century. The language is restrained, polished, and at all times elegant. There is no invective, no bitterness; and, what is singularly remarkable for the time, there is no coarseness. He takes up one by one the different doctrines of the Church and then leads the reader to realize the genesis of his doubts and the sad regret he experiences in being obliged to relinquish a Faith in which he no longer believes. He writes:

At a period of life when discernment should be ripe, when passions should be calm, and principles settled, if a man relinquish the opinions of his youth; if he break through the impressions of early education, and the habits of thinking with which he has long been familiar; if he abandon connections which he has cherished from his infancy, to throw himself among strangers and begin the world anew; surely a consciousness of duty, or some unworthy principle must be the spring of such extraordinary conduct. In this case, a decent respect to his own character; to the connections, which he quits; and those, which he embraces, seems to call aloud for the motives of so important a change.

In the introduction to his famous *Letter*, Wharton lays the beginning of his change in religious belief to the friendship he had formed in England with "many valuable Protestants, with whom I lived in habits of intimacy." This served, he asserts, to enlarge his ideas and to wean his mind from the narrowness of the Catholic system. It soon became painful to regard such fellow-Christians as being imbued with error—"I dismissed the cruel idea with contempt and indignation; but with it a leading principle of my former belief was abandoned." Three points at issue between the Catholic and Protestant creeds—Transubstantiation, the infallibility of the Church, and the impossibility of being saved outside the communion of the Catholic Church—were then taken up and treated in detail, with wide knowledge and a profuse appeal to the theological writers of the past. That other influences, apart from his changed attitude

towards the doctrines of the Church, were at work in his heart, he freely confesses. One of these influences he speaks of, since no doubt, the rumours about his private life had reached his ears. "Many should say (and I expect it will be said) that I was tired of the law which obliged me to live single, and was willing to unite myself to a more indulgent community. I can only refer such declaimers to the littleness of their own minds, where, perhaps, they will discover the ungenerous source of so illiberal a reflection. I make no scruple, indeed, here publicly do acknowledge, that for some time back, I have considered the law of celibacy as a cruel usurpation of the inalienable rights of nature, as unwarrantable in its principle, inadequate in its object, and dreadful in its consequences." This obvious suspicion, he knew, would be present in the minds of many, and he declares before God that the law of celibacy would not alone have led him to abandon communion with the Catholic Church. Naturally, once he was freed from the discipline of the Church, he would marry, but he protests that "no action of my life ever authorized" anyone to suspect that he had been recreant to his vows.

In his treatment of the doctrines of the Church he made use chiefly of Chillingworth's *Religion of Protestants*, Usher's *Answer to a Challenge*, Claude's *Défense de la Réformation*, and Hurd's *On the Prophecies*. There is little to be gained in reviewing his logic or his method of attack upon the fundamental belief of the Church; but the whole treatise is written with such suavity and charm that it no doubt had considerable effect upon his earliest readers. In summary, Wharton described the situation as follows:

My religion is that of the Bible: whatever that sacred book proposes as an object of my faith or a rule of my conduct was inspired by the unerring Spirit of God, and for that reason I admit it with all the faculties of my soul. Your religion is the doctrine of the Council of Trent: mine the plain truths delivered in the Scriptures. You shelter yourselves under the decisions of a tribunal, which you believe to be infallible: I rely solely upon the authority of God's word. . . . Such is the religion in which, after a long, and, as I trust, sincere deliberation, I have ultimately chosen. . . . Upon this will I stake my happiness for eternity. . . . And now, my fellow Christians, I must take my leave of you. Some of you, perhaps, will believe me, when I assure them

that I do it with very painful regret. The many civilities which I experienced during my residence among you, have made a strong and lasting impression on my mind. I trust no alteration in my religious opinions will be ever be able to efface it. Convinced by reason, and taught by revelation, that true and genuine religion consists more in perfect union of heart than entire conformity of opinion, I shall still deem it my duty to cherish the sentiments of gratitude, esteem, and charity, which the worth and behaviour of several characters among you first excited in my breast. To the last of these, moreover, you are entitled, as fellow men and fellow Christians. Sentiments like these, coming from a supposed enemy, and an obscure individual, will probably be considered by many with contempt or indifference. They who cannot discriminate between the personal merit and the speculative opinions of men, will certainly rate them very low. But to persons truly candid and sincere themselves, such affections can never appear less acceptable for being cherished by a man, who, without any prospect of emolument, or promise of attention from the communion he embraces, has sacrificed a certain and comfortable subsistence, and hazarded a tolerable character among his nearest connexions, rather than incur the reproaches of his own mind, or the guilt of hypocrisy. Be this, however, as it may, it must ever prove a point of great importance to myself, not to lose sight of a commandment, which by special preference our common Redeemer calls his own; and which, as you know, is nothing more than mutual forbearance, benevolence, and love.<sup>11</sup>

After the publication of the *Letter* (Philadelphia, 1784), Wharton was accepted by the Episcopalian Church and as a minister of that Church he sat in the first General Convention of that body, in New York, in the autumn of 1784. The following year he became the rector of the Episcopal church at New Castle, Delaware, and in 1786 as President of the Protestant Episcopal Convention of Delaware, he recommended his friend, Rev. William White, of Philadelphia, as bishop of that Church. In 1791, he was appointed rector of a church near Wilmington, Delaware, but left that post in 1792 to reside at Prospect Hill, near the same city. Three years later he was elected principal of an academy at Burlington, New Jersey, and in 1798, he became the rector of St. Mary's Church in Burlington, remaining in the post until his death, July 23, 1833. In 1796, Dr. Wharton published at Philadelphia, his *Short and Candid Enquiry* into the proofs of Christ's divinity; in 1813, he wrote an attack on Father Anthony

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<sup>11</sup> *Letter, etc.*, pp. 39-40.

Kohlmann's exposition of the doctrine of the Sacrament of Penance.

Dr. Wharton was twice married; his first wife was Mary Weems, the daughter of Colonel Weems of Maryland. She died on June 2, 1798, and in her honor Wharton published an elegy, which begins:

Dull roll the hours, and heavy hangs the day,  
Oppress'd with wo my broken spirit lies,  
Since my poor heart, to wretchedness a prey,  
Heav'd its last sigh o'er Mary's closing eyes.

O lovely Mary! dearer far to me  
Than India's wealth, or pleasure's brightest charms,  
What can alas! supply the loss of thee,  
For ever, ever absent from my arms?

How in this world, to me a desert grown,  
Without my heart's best portion can I dwell?  
For me forlorn, forsaken, and alone,  
O toll full soon the last sad solemn knell.

Farewell, bless'd spirit; and if aught below  
Can still to thee a sense of pain impart,  
O witness not my agonizing wo,  
View not the gloom that broods upon my heart.<sup>12</sup>

His grief, however, was not of long duration, for he married shortly afterwards Anna Kinsey, the daughter of the Chief Justice of New Jersey. Mrs. Wharton survived the former Catholic priest by many years, and it is from her that his biographer, Bishop Doane, received considerable information about Dr. Wharton. "The first characteristic of Dr. Wharton which arrested your attention," said Doane in the funeral sermon he delivered in St. Mary's Church, on August 4, 1833, "was his singular purity of character. He was single-hearted and single-eyed beyond almost all men whom I know. He had neither guile nor the suspicion of it. Long as he lived in the world, he seemed to have suffered little from its contact. There was a delicacy of sentiment and feeling in him, which not only bespoke

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<sup>12</sup> DOANE, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80.



his own purity of heart, but kept the atmosphere about him pure."<sup>13</sup>

Dr. Wharton was an antagonist worthy of Father John Carroll's pen. The *Letter* received much attention both in this country and in England, where it was written, and on both sides of the Atlantic the Catholic reply was awaited with interest. Wharton's display of learning, while pedantic, caught the fancy of the intellectual groups in the Republic, and it was in this display that Carroll proved him to have over-reached himself, for many of Wharton's quotations, not only from the Fathers and theologians, but from Protestant authors, were found to be inaccurate and erroneous. John Carroll's *Address* is twice as long as the *Letter*, and is written in a style as dignified and lofty as that of his apostate cousin. Scanty as were Carroll's sources of information and difficult as it was to refer directly to the authorities quoted by Wharton, the prefect-apostolic in a remarkably short time completed his answer and, in the opinion of the leading churchmen of the time, won on every point over Dr. Wharton. Father Carroll avers that he would have taken no notice of the *Letter* had it not been so widely circulated in America. Line by line he follows Wharton's argumentation, and at times his pages become eloquent with the nobility of his defense of Catholic doctrines. Fortunately, he was able to procure through Molyneux the Protestant authorities cited by Wharton, and with them before him, he makes many a trenchant observation upon the latter's ability in the art of critical use of these sources. The old hackneyed arguments against the Church Carroll refutes with a logic that reveals the power of the teacher in the days when he taught at Liège and Bruges. As Shea says:

Like all Dr. Carroll's writings, the *Address* had a peculiar dignity and equanimity, was free from all acerbity and harshness, and was admirably fitted to exercise a beneficial influence on the public mind. In one point he had a peculiar advantage. Dr. Wharton, who had chosen to remain in England during the struggle, could not impeach the loyalty of the Catholic clergy and people of America, and his anonymous poem to

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65. It is said that while in Burlington, Dr. Wharton had in his service an Irish Catholic servant-girl, who did not know his earlier history. She fell dangerously ill and begged her master to send for a priest. In spite of his *Letter* in which confession was definitely rejected, Dr. Wharton told the girl he was a priest and so heard her confession. (Cf. OLIVER, *Collections S. J.*, p. 66.)

George Washington did not place him on a par with Dr. Carroll, who came back at the beginning of the Revolution to share his country's fortunes, and who had at her call proceeded to Canada to advance her interest.<sup>14</sup>

Dr. Carroll opens his attack upon Wharton by refuting the charge, hoary with age, that belief in the Church is the result of ignorance. He takes up the phrase which Wharton had belaboured—*Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*—and shows that the chaplain's rigorous interpretation is nowhere held by the Fathers or the theologians. The main arguments used by Wharton against the infallible teaching powers of the Church are shown to be sophistical, and Dr. Carroll emphasizes in his reply to the other points at issue that the Church can teach nothing that is not implicitly revealed in Holy Scripture. He convicts Wharton of garbling texts from Bellarmine, of misquoting the Councils, and of a conscious misapplication of Scripture to the tenets of the Catholic Church.

As an example of Carroll's apologetical method, the following passage may be quoted:

I will not deny, that I was surprised when I read the first passage cited by the Chaplain; it appeared so opposite to the principles which St. Chrysostom had laid down in several parts of his works. It was a mortifying circumstance, that I could not conveniently have recourse to that holy doctor's writings, nor minutely examine the passage objected, together with its context. I procured a friend to examine the edition of Chrysostom's works, belonging to the public library at Annapolis; he has carefully and repeatedly read the 49th homily on St. Matthew; and not one syllable of the Chaplain's citation is to be found in it. After receiving this notice, I was for some time doubtful, whether it might not be owing to a difference in the editions. I could not persuade myself, that he, who so solemnly calls heaven to witness for the impartiality and integrity of his inquiry, would publicly expose himself to a well-grounded imputation of unpardonable negligence, in a matter of such serious concern. But I have now the fullest evidence, that the passage, for which Chrysostom on Matthew, hom. 49, is quoted, is not taken from that father. It is extracted from a work of no credit, supposed to be written in the 6th century, entitled, *The unfinished work on Matthew*. But had it even been fairly quoted from him, the Chaplain would not have had so much cause for triumph as he imagines. For the passage he adduces

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<sup>14</sup> SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 227.

carries with it equal condemnation of the Protestant and Catholic rule of faith.<sup>15</sup>

Dr. Carroll's *Address* ends with the following personal note :

I have now gone through a task painful in every point of view in which I could consider it. To write for the public eye, on any occasion whatever, is neither agreeable to my feelings, my leisure, nor opportunities; that it is likewise disproportioned to my abilities, my readers, I doubt not will soon discover. But if reduced to the necessity of publishing, I would wish that my duty led me to any species of composition, rather than that of religious controversy. Mankind have conceived such a contempt for it, that an author cannot entertain a hope of enjoying those gratifications, which in treating other subjects may support his spirits and enliven his imagination. Much less could I have a prospect of these incitements in the prosecution of my present undertaking. I could not forget, in the beginning, progress, and conclusion of it, that the habits of thinking, the prejudices, perhaps even the passions of many of my readers, would be set against all the arguments I could offer; and that the weaknesses, the errors, the absurdities of the writer, would be imputed to the errors and absurdity of his religion. But of all considerations, the most painful was, that I had to combat him, with whom I had been connected in an intercourse of friendship and mutual good offices; and in connexion with whom, I hoped to have consummated my course of our common ministry, in the service of virtue and religion. But when I found these expectations disappointed; when I found that he not only abandoned our faith and communion, but had imputed to us doctrines foreign to our belief, and having a natural tendency to embitter against us the minds of our fellow citizens, I felt an anguish too keen for description; and perhaps the Chaplain will experience a similar sentiment, when he comes coolly to reflect on this instance of his conduct. It did not become the friend of toleration to misinform, and to sow in minds so misinformed, the seeds of religious animosity.

Under all these distressful feelings, one consideration alone relieved me in writing; and that was, the hope of vindicating your religion to your own selves at least, and preserving the steadfastness of your faith. But even this prospect should not have induced me to engage in the controversy, if I could fear that it would disturb the harmony now subsisting amongst all Christians in this country, so blessed with civil and religious liberty; which, if we have the wisdom and temper to preserve, America may come to exhibit a proof to the world, that general and equal toleration, by giving a free circulation to fair argument, is the most effectual method to bring all denominations of Christians to a unity of faith.

The motives, which led the Chaplain to the step he has taken, are

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<sup>15</sup> *Concise View, etc.*, p. 61.

known best to God and himself. For the vindication of his conduct, he appeals to the dictates of conscience with a seriousness and solemnity, which must add greatly to his guilt, if he be not sincere. He is anxious to impress on his readers a firm conviction that neither views of preferment nor sensuality, had any influence on his determination. He appears to be jealous, that suspicions will arise unfavourable to the purity of his intentions. He shall have no cause to impute to me, the spreading of these suspicions. But I must entreat him with an earnestness suggested by the most perfect good will and zealous regard for his welfare, to consider the sanctity of the solemn and deliberate engagement, which at an age of perfect maturity he contracted with Almighty God.<sup>16</sup>

Wharton was soon made aware of Dr. Carroll's success in refuting the *Letter*, and he wrote a *Reply* to the *Address*, which, however, failed to carry conviction to those interested in the controversy. "It is with deep concern," he says, "that the late Worcester Chaplain finds himself under the disagreeable necessity of appearing again before the tribunal of the public . . . Such an attack, of a complexion which he did not expect, lately made upon his character, rouses every faculty of defense, that reason suggests or truth can authorize. The weapon now levelled at his candour and accuracy, must, if possible, be parried by the Chaplain; and, what to him is exquisitely painful, must be made to recoil upon the hand that wields it." The "weapon" had found the vulnerable spot in Wharton's armour, and the *Reply* fell short of all expectations. Other pamphlets were written for and against in this celebrated controversy. Rev. William Pilling, O.S.F., addressed a *Caveat to the Catholics of Worcester against the insinuating Letter of Dr. Wharton* (London, 1785); and Father Joseph Berington answered Wharton's *Letter* in his *Reflections Addressed to the Rev. John Hawkins* (London, 1785). Hawkins was an apostate Benedictine, who wrote in defense of Wharton. These brochures gave rise to others, and also to an interesting bit of correspondence between the well-known Irish priest of London, Father Arthur O'Leary, and Dr. Carroll.

The Wharton-Carroll controversy gave the prefect-apostolic, for such Carroll had been named on June 9, 1784, a prominence in the learned circles of the new Republic. His *Address* was being read and favorably commented upon among Catholics and

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 116-119.

non-Catholics when the news became public that he had been chosen head of the Church in the United States. A copy of Father Carroll's *Address* reached his friend, Father Thorpe, in Rome, about October, 1786. Writing on December 2, 1786, Father Thorpe says:

I had before seen the London edition of it, a copy of which very speedily came to this Irish College, where the Rector, an Italian Priest, with the assistance of one of his scholars attempted to publish some remarks on it, which I sent to Mr. Charles Plowden to be transmitted to you for your amusement. They merit no other notice. Your address has pleased every body, who has read it within my knowledge. The moderation or rather singular modesty of your pen gives a grace to the goodness of the cause which it defends. You truly treat Mr. W. like a Father and a friend, and I hope that your charitable concern for him will, in time, be confirmed. The apology that he produces for his conduct is one of the weakest that I ever saw made by any of his unhappy predecessors in that walk. It is much below and unbecoming of the character, which I have frequently heard of him as a scholar; his appeals to conscience and self persuasions are little artifices contrived to engage attention at the Tea tables which he frequented at Worcester.<sup>17</sup>

"You have written," says Plowden (August 26, 1785), "as a scholar, a Christian, a gentleman and a man of feeling. . . . When I read your work, I easily foresaw the good effect which it would produce in strengthening the faith of the North American Catholics, who must be too well apprised of the artifices of your antagonist to need a rejoinder to his *Reply*."<sup>18</sup>

After the death of Archbishop Carroll in 1815, Dr. Wharton published his *Concise View of the Principal Points of Controversy between the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches*. The volume contains his *Letter*, Carroll's *Address*, Wharton's *Reply*, a *Short Answer* to Kohlmann's pamphlet on the New York Confessional Case, and other papers. It is significant that during Carroll's life-time no member of the Protestant clergy ventured to come out in print in favour of Dr. Wharton. The *Concise View* is prefaced by a remarkable letter from Bishop Bruté, dated Baltimore, March 30, 1816, which contains a pathetic

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<sup>17</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 8-H6; printed in the *Researches*, vol. xvii, p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, Case 6-J8; printed in *Researches*, vol. xiii, p. 173.



appeal to Wharton to return to the Church and to his priesthood. An equally stirring reply follows, in which Wharton says:

The feelings which your letter excited, would not have partaken of anything like resentment, had you not mentioned my venerable relative and former friend, Archbishop Carroll, as countenancing your denunciations and abuse. I knew him well. I loved him during his lifetime, and shall revere him during my own. Were he still among us, I would have transmitted your letter to him; where, I am confident, it would have met the reception it deserves. He was too well acquainted with the sacred rights of conscience, and the anomalies of the human mind, to condemn the exercise of the first, or wish to regulate the latter by the standard of his own opinions; much less would he have presumed to consign them both to perdition. Sir, we Americans are better taught in these matters; and it must stir our bile to hear arrogant foreigners, presuming to vilify the most numerous classes of Christians in our country; to find them, when scarcely escaped from the fury of Jacobinism, breathing among their kind receivers the spirit of Inquisitors. On every occasion, both in public and in private, I have uniformly treated my former connexions with respect. In abandoning some of their doctrines, I still entertained for their persons and virtues the most tender attachment, and have never, for a moment, harboured the presumption of passing condemnation on them for opinions, which to profess myself, would be sinful prevarication.

An interesting episode connected with Carroll's *Answer* to Wharton is his short and dramatic correspondence with the Rev. Joseph Berington, the prominent English Catholic divine, who had answered Wharton in his *Reflections Addressed to the Rev. John Hawkins*. Berington's *State and Behaviour of English Catholics from the Reformation to the year 1780* had caused a sensation in Catholic and Protestant circles. Carroll had given copious extracts from Berington's volume in the *Address*. Certain errors in the book were condemned and Bishop Douglass had deprived the brilliant controversialist of his sacerdotal faculties. Charles Plowden, Carroll's chief correspondent, was Berington's strongest opponent; and it is a proof of John Carroll's independence that, during the time Berington was attacked by Plowden, the American prefect-apostolic wrote a letter of praise, expressing his particular satisfaction of the views on toleration and church government in Berington's *State and Behaviour*. A copy of his letter to Berington (undated, but of the year 1787) is in the Baltimore Cathedral Archives. At the end of the letter

Carroll added that he would be happy to see Berington take up two problems for discussion in a book—"the ascertaining of the boundaries to the spiritual jurisdiction of the Holy See," and "the use of the Latin tongue in the publick Liturgy," saying:

I consider these two points as the greatest obstacles to Christians of other denominations to a thorough union with us, or at least to a much more general diffusion of our religion, particularly in N. America. . . . With respect to the latter point, I cannot help thinking that the alteration of the Church discipline ought not only to be solicited, but insisted upon as essential to the service of God and benefit of mankind. Can there be anything more preposterous than an unknown tongue; and in this country either for want of books or inability to read, the great part of our congregations must be utterly ignorant of the meaning and sense of the publick office of the Church. It may have been prudent, for aught I know, to impose a compliance in this matter with the insulting and reproachful demands of the first reformers; but to continue the practice of the Latin liturgy in the present state of things must be owing either to chimerical fears of innovation or to indolence and inattention in the first pastors of the national Churches in not joining to solicit or indeed ordain this necessary alteration.

Berington made use of this letter in his stand against Bishop Douglass and the result was that Archbishop Troy took alarm and wrote warning Carroll that the question of a vernacular liturgy had almost become a point of controversy in Ireland and that he had written a pastoral of some sixty pages against the proposition. Father Arthur O'Leary also grew alarmed and wrote to Carroll, criticizing his views, as well as a note in Carroll's *Address*, in which the American ex-Jesuit spoke rather plainly on the part taken by Clement XIV in the suppression of the Jesuits. Father O'Leary published (1786) a *Review* of the controversy to which he added a *Defense of the Conduct of Pope Clement XIV*. This letter to Carroll is not extant, but a draft of Carroll's reply (undated) is in the Baltimore Cathedral Archives:

I find that you are not pleased with my note on the late Pope; and that you think I was mistaken in attributing to him a time-serving policy. Peace to his spirit and may God have mercy on his soul, but whatever allowance charity may wish for him, the pen of impartial history will not join you and Mr. Pilling in attributing to his public conduct (and to that the destruction of the Jesuits belongs) the virtue of

benevolence. You think that your intimacy with the good Cardinal de Luines gave you opportunities of information which I had not; on the contrary, I think that having spent in Italy the two years immediately preceding our dissolution, and the last of them at Rome; and mixing in all companies, and not being much with my own Brethren, I had means of collecting knowledge which were perhaps wanting to Cardinal de Luines himself; and I certainly saw repeated instances of conduct, which upon the coolest and most unprejudiced consideration appear irreconcilable, not only with benevolence, but even with common humanity, and the plainest principles of justice. At the same time I do not take upon me to say that the whole weight of this misconduct fell upon the Pope, unless it be for withdrawing himself totally from business and trusting his authority to men who so shamefully abused it; I hope you will excuse this liberty; your writings express a free soul; and I cannot think you would wish me to dissemble the feelings of mine. But though I communicate them to Mr. O'Leary, I have neither ambition to make them public nor fear to do so, if occasion require. . . . A few copies of Mr. Berington's late work had reached America before your letter; but I am not the less obliged to you for your kind intention of sending it. With that gentleman I had a slight acquaintance in Europe, and some correspondence has existed between us, occasioned by his former publication on the *Behaviour of the English Catholics*. In a letter to him and before I had a thought of ever being in my present station, I expressed a wish that the pastors of the Church would see cause to grant to this extensive continent jointly with England and Ireland, etc., the same privilege as is enjoyed by many churches of infinitely less extent; that of having their liturgy in their own language; for I do indeed conceive that one of the most popular prejudices against us is that our public prayers are unintelligible to our hearers. Many of the poor people, and the negroes generally, not being able to read, have no technical help to confine their attention. Mr. Berington's brilliant imagination attributes to me projects which far exceed my powers, and in which I should find no co-operation from my clerical brethren in America, were I rash enough to attempt their introduction upon my own authority.

Berington's reply to Father Carroll is dated London, March 27, 1788. It is one of the most significant documents of this period and it would be difficult to say just what effect it had in convincing Carroll of the necessity of episcopal government, and of episcopal government bound by the most solemn ties to the centre of Christendom:

*Oscot, near Birmingham, March 27, 1788.*

*Dear Sir:*

I have reason, I fear, to reproach myself with some negligence for having so long neglected taking any notice of a very kind and flattering

letter I received from you many months ago. When it came to England, I was abroad in France; and since that, my situation has been very unsettled. I have to thank you for the very high approbation you express of my *State and Behaviour of Catholics*; a work which has been applauded and censured here almost in equal measure. Good, however, I know it has produced on the whole, and with that it would be unreasonable, not to be satisfied. You, I believe, are pretty well acquainted with the general dispositions and prejudices of the body, to which I belong; however, I am happy to be able to say that a great change is daily working, and that the prospect is opening before us.

Mr. Talbot who has promised to forward this letter to you, will also send you a small pamphlet I published very lately. The work will speak for itself, and it will tell you with what pleasure and approbation I read your reply to Mr. Wharton. Your work has been much admired here; but a foolish controversy has arisen in consequence of a misjudged omission, in the first Edition of it, of the note, wherein you censure, with becoming liberty, the conduct of the late Pope.

We have long been told you were designed for the American Mitre, but we are now told that the report was premature. I am sorry for it, if it is not to be. With your liberality of mind, we had every reason to know, that the Catholic Church of the United States would have been raised on proper foundations. You will read, I trust, with some pleasure, the short sketch of a scheme of Reformation which, in the view of your promotion, I have attributed to you. The general sentiments you expressed, in the letter I had from you, very fully justified that representation of your ideas. To their realisation I look forward with great satisfaction.

If you be chosen to the mitre, undoubtedly you will accept none but ordinary powers (though the contrary I have heard suggested); or rather you will not be disposed to surrender those powers, which the essential nature of the Christian establishment confers upon you. With these powers you will form a national Church; and this being done, every necessary reformation of abuses, and every modification of rites and discipline, the expediency of which may strike you, will be effected without obstacles, at least without those obstacles which the Court of Rome ever has, and ever will throw in the way of a Church miserably constituted as is that of the English Catholics. From us you may draw a useful lesson. Certainly were I circumstanced as you in America seem to be, I would shut my eyes on the 14 last centuries, and only consider what was the prerogative of the See of Rome during the Apostolic ages and the years immediately succeeding to them. All that is *essential* then existed; the rest is abuse and usurpation. You will persevere also, I flatter myself, in the warm wishes you express of having the public service in the language of the people. That is a point of discipline which any national Church, I conceive, may modify at will.

If it ever be in my power to serve you, or any of your friends, need I say with what alacrity I should do it. And I shall be happy, as far as

circumstances will permit, to keep up a correspondence with you. With the sincerest regard I remain, Dear Sir:

*Your affectionate, humble servant*

JOSEPH BERINGTON

One dissentient voice to the praise generally given to Carroll's *Address* came from Rome. Plowden writes on September 29, 1786:

Father Thorpe informs me that your Letter on Wharton has been criticized at Rome in the *Giornale Ecclesiastico* of last July, by an Abate Cucagna of the Irish College, a red hot champion in litigious Theology, who is a leader of the modern disciples of St. Austin and maddens at the name of a Jesuit. He principally finds fault with your manner of confuting W.'s objection to the Catholic Church from her supposed want of charity in excluding all from heaven who are not of her communion. He says that in this part of the answer the fundamental principles of the Christian Faith are not followed by the zealous Mgr. Carroll.

This beginning of Catholic American controversial literature deserves more space than can be allotted to it in a life of John Carroll. The two men met in Philadelphia, in October, 1785, at the house of Thomas FitzSimons, in order to arrange certain business matters connected with Wharton's family, but no record of their conversation has come down to us.

Shea sees in the interest aroused by the Carroll-Wharton controversy the beginning of the Catholic press in this country. Talbot, the Dublin printer, who had settled in Philadelphia, published in 1784 an edition of Reeve's *History of the Old and New Testament*. Up to this time and afterwards, Catholic books were published on the subscription plan, and the lists of subscribers are valuable in helping us to locate the residences of the clergy of that day. Challoner's *Bible*, issued at Dublin in 1763-4, has American names in its subscription list. Challoner's *Catholic Christian Instructed* was printed in Philadelphia in 1774, and his *Garden of the Soul*, the most popular English prayer-book ever issued, was published there in the same year.



CHAPTER X  
ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION IN THE ENGLISH  
COLONIES  
(1757-1776)

The political and religious cleavage between England and America, caused by the Treaty of Paris (1783), brought to a close the long and unsatisfactory system by which the American Church had been governed since 1634. The historical antecedents of Carroll's appointment on June 9, 1784, as "Superior of the Mission in the Thirteen United States of North America," as the Brief styles it, run back for several centuries; in fact, to the beginning of Elizabeth's reign.

The English Catholic bishops were deprived of their sees in 1559, the administration of the Oath of Supremacy, passed in Parliament, May 8, 1559, having begun with the bishops in June of that year.<sup>1</sup> Of all those then living, only one, Bishop Kitchin of Llandaff, who lived to be called the *calamitas sedis suae*, accepted the oath. Of the rest, three were on the Continent; among them, Bishop Goldwell of St. Asaph's, who reached Trent in June, 1561, in time to take part in the discussion on the attendance of Catholics at Anglican services. The others were placed under restraint, under the custody of the new Anglican bishops, or put in prison.<sup>2</sup> "The Supremacy Bill gives the clue to the whole of English Protestantism. England did not leave the Church on a question of dogma, but of jurisdiction, though changes of dogma, of course, followed immediately."<sup>3</sup> With the removal of the bishops, the defection of the Church in England began, and the great Church collapsed almost like a house of cards. From 1559 down to the death of the last

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<sup>1</sup> POLLEN, *The English Catholics in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, pp. 34-35. London, 1920.

<sup>2</sup> FLANAGAN, *History of the Church in England*, vol. ii, p. 150. London, 1857; WARD, *The English Secular Clergy*, pp. 10-11. London, 1910.

<sup>3</sup> POLLEN, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

Catholic bishop, Bishop Watson, in 1580, the Church staggered to its fall—not to die, it is true, for it was to live on in secret in the catacombs, as in ancient days. The Sacrifice of the Mass and the administration of the Sacraments never wholly ceased, even during the bitterest period of the persecution, but “considered as a visible, public, hierarchic body, with its ancient rites, courts, privileges and jurisdiction, it was violently suppressed, and ere long ceased to exist.”<sup>4</sup>

Although Cardinal William Allen in a patriarchal way was recognized at Rome as the representative of the English Catholics during the last twenty years of his life (1575-1594), there was no head to the ancient Church of England. From 1598 to 1623, the Holy See made the unfortunate blunder of appointing arch-priests or prefects to that position. The only English Catholic churchman of the time who had the necessary courage, and with all his faults, the ability, to reorganize the shattered House of God in England, was Father Robert Persons, the Jesuit. The dilatory proceedings at Rome after the death of Allen left the English Catholics without a leader for four years, and paralysis was soon visible in English Catholic centres from London to the Venerable College in Rome. Father Persons was a born fighter. His years on the Continent, many of them passed under the influence of that prince of procrastinators, Philip II of Spain, had not lessened his vigorous appreciation of the struggle facing Catholicism in England. Half-way measures were distasteful to the man. He wanted, and he had the right to speak, for all recognized him as the leader, now that Allen was gone—he wanted the fight carried to the very threshold of the English court. His plan of 1597 is clear-cut and masterly.<sup>5</sup> Bishops should be sent to strengthen the souls of the Catholics who remained. Confirmation was needed; Holy Orders were to be conferred; counsel to be given; official decisions on religious questions which were torturing the minds of the faithful and causing apostasies were necessary. It is useless to accuse the man of promoting this plan, which he had twice before suggested to Rome, for the purpose of gaining control of the clergy for

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>5</sup> Printed in DODD-TIERNEY, *Church History of England*, vol. iii, pp. 118-119. London, 1840.

his party in the Succession Question. Father Persons understood the religious situation of his country more cogently than any living Catholic at that period; and it is to be regretted that jealousy and political intrigue foiled him in his gallant attempt to save the realm to the Church. Instead of sending bishops to teach and to confirm, and, if necessary, to die for the Faith as an example to their priests and people, the Holy See compromised by appointing simple clergymen, with the empty title of archpriest, at the head of church government in England. The compromise of the archipresbyterate was to rebound with sorrow upon all concerned, and it is significant that in the midst of the anxieties the Appellant Controversy occasioned to the Holy See, the old English Jesuit should be banished from Rome to Naples. He had done his best to avert disaster to the juridic government of the Faith in England and had failed.<sup>6</sup> From 1598 to 1623, the Archpriests Blackwell, Birkhead, and Harrison, did little more than bring confusion to the remnants of Catholicism in England. The appointment of Dr. William Bishop as Titular Bishop of Chalcedon, in 1623, gave a fleeting hope to the priests and people who had survived the hurricane of Elizabeth's reign and the sullen fury of the leaders during the reign of James I. The Bishop of Chalcedon lived scarcely a year after his consecration, passing to his reward on April 13, 1624. In the marriage treaty between Henrietta Maria of France and Charles I, the successor of James I had promised "on his word of a King" that the Catholics would be allowed a larger freedom. The Holy See, therefore (1625), appointed in Dr. Bishop's place, Dr. Richard Smith, as Bishop of England; but the Protestant bishops soon forced him out of the country (1631); he returned to France, and died in Paris in 1655.<sup>7</sup> Bishop Smith created the means of effecting his jurisdiction by dividing his extensive diocese into seven vicariates, twenty-three archdeaconries, and a number of rural deaneries.<sup>8</sup> He likewise confirmed the Episcopal

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<sup>6</sup> POLLEN, *The Institution of the Archpriest Blackwell*. London, 1916. The opposite view to the one given in the text will be found in TAUNTON, *History of the Jesuits in England* (London, 1901), LAW, *Jesuits and Seculars in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1889), and in most of the modern treatises on the Appellant Controversy.

<sup>7</sup> BRADY, *Annals of the Catholic Hierarchy, etc.* (1585-1876), pp. 74ss. London, 1878.

<sup>8</sup> SERGEANT, *An Account of the Chapter, etc.*, p. 51. London, 1853.

Chapter, which had been erected by Dr. Bishop, and after Bishop Smith's death, jurisdiction devolved upon this Chapter. For the next thirty years the dean of the Chapter, with dubious confirmation of his right over the Church in England, ruled the Catholics down to the appointment of Bishop John Leyburne, in 1685, as Vicar-Apostolic of All England.<sup>9</sup> Three years later (1688), England was divided into four vicariates, one of which was the Vicariate-Apostolic of London.<sup>10</sup>

From 1688, down to the appointment of Father John Carroll as Superior of the Church in the United States (1784), the London Vicariate presumably had jurisdiction over all the Catholics who had settled in the English colonies across the Atlantic. Bishop Richard Smith was in exile in 1633, when Father Andrew White, S. J., started out for America with Calvert's expedition to Maryland, and he received faculties from his own Provincial in London, Father Richard Blount. The Maryland-Pennsylvania Mission was largely a Jesuit one, and it is to the Provincials of the Society in England that the Fathers, labouring here in America, looked as to their chief pastor.<sup>11</sup> The question arises quite naturally: What was the relationship between the London vicars-Apostolic and the Catholics in the Thirteen Colonies across the seas? The only serious contribution to this question has been given by Canon Burton in his *Life of Bishop Challoner*,<sup>12</sup> the last but one of these London vicars-apostolic who held juridic power over the Church in the colonies. "The subject is an obscure one," says Burton. "It has been passed over in absolute silence by all Dr. Challoner's biographers, and no information was available until Father Thomas Hughes, S.J.,

<sup>9</sup> "From the end of the sixteenth to the end of the seventeenth century English Catholics had known four different ecclesiastical authorities: archpriests (1599-1621), single vicars-apostolic (1623-1655), dean and chapter (1655-1685), and finally vicars-apostolic again, one from 1685 to 1688, and four after that date." BURTON, *Life and Times of Bishop Challoner*, vol. i, p. 248.

<sup>10</sup> The London vicars-Apostolic who presumed or exercised jurisdiction over the Catholics in the English colonies were:

Bishop John Leyburne (Jan. 30, 1688-June 9, 1702);  
Bishop Bonaventure Giffard (March 14, 1703-March 12, 1734);  
Bishop Benjamin Petre (March 12, 1734-Dec. 22, 1758);  
Bishop Richard Challoner (Dec. 22, 1758-Jan. 10, 1781);  
Bishop James Talbot (Jan. 10, 1781-June 9, 1784).

<sup>11</sup> A list of these Provincials and of the Superiors in America will be found in HUGHES, *History of the Jesuits in North America, etc.*, Text, vol. ii, pp. 17-18.

<sup>12</sup> Vol. ii, pp. 123-148 (*Bishop Challoner's American Jurisdiction*).

began his researches for his *History of the Society of Jesus in North America*." Father Hughes has given us the results of his earlier researches in an article in the *Dublin Review*, entitled *The London Vicariate-Apostolic and the West Indies*.<sup>13</sup> So far as the documents at our disposal warrant it, it seems safe to conclude that from 1634 down to 1696, the year of the special decree *Alias a particulari*, of Innocent XII, by which an attempt was made to bring harmony between the regular and secular clergy in England, there is no evidence for the exercise of any canonical rights over the colonies by the ecclesiastical superiors in England. The question does not seem to have been raised again until 1715, when the Maryland clergy admitted that they were uncertain whether they were subject to London or to Quebec. In 1721, Bishop Giffard granted to the English Jesuit Provincial the privilege of conferring plenary indulgences *in articulo mortis*. This privilege was communicated to Father Thomas Mansell, the Jesuit Superior in Maryland. In 1722, Bishop Giffard expressed his approval of a regulation regarding the observance of holy days of obligation in Maryland. This is the first recorded instance of the exercise of jurisdiction in the colonies by the London vicar-apostolic.

It is to be noted that the Brief creating the four vicariates in 1688 makes no mention of the English colonies in America. The London District was definitively outlined in the division as "having jurisdiction in the county of Kent, Middlesex, Essex, Surrey, Hertford, Sussex, Berkshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, in the Isle of Wight, in the Isles of Jersey and Guernsey." This evidently excludes the American colonies. The theory might be held, from the scanty sources we have, that Propaganda had quite lost sight of the Catholic Church in the future Republic. The absence of any document to show the Congregation's interest in the welfare of the Church in this part of North America, is in sharp contrast with the vast amount of documentary material for this same epoch in the history of the Church outside the English colonies and would partially substantiate such an hypothesis. The earliest document we have is a letter by Father Henry Harrison, S.J., who writes from Loretto, Italy,

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<sup>13</sup> *Dublin Review*, vol. cxxiv (Jan., 1914), pp. 67-93.



in 1695, giving a description of the American missions; but whether to the Jesuit General or to Propaganda is uncertain: "When I was sent by my Superior to those missions (Maryland-Pennsylvania), there were not as yet any English Catholic bishops. Afterwards, four such were created under the Catholic king, James. But to which one of them the aforesaid countries (the American Continent and the West Indies) are subject, I do not know. At all events, when I was in those missions, there was no vicar-apostolic there; but all the missionaries depended upon their regular superiors alone."<sup>14</sup> If the decree *Alias a particulari* of 1696 had been obeyed in the sense that the Holy See had meant it, namely, the subordination in all matters of sacerdotal jurisdiction of the regular clergy to the vicars-apostolic, then we should begin at once to find evidence in the Archives of the vicar-apostolic of London (Westminster) for the exercise of such canonical powers. But the earliest record, that of the matrimonial case presented in 1714, to the English Jesuit Provincial by Father Killick, S.J., of Maryland, makes no allusion to Bishop Giffard, then the Vicar-Apostolic of London.<sup>15</sup> The Provincial, Father Parker, presented the case to Father Richard Plowden, Rector of the English College, Rome, who forwarded the petition to Propaganda (February 25, 1715). Propaganda's reply would infer that the petition for faculties to dispense in such cases should be presented to the vicars-apostolic of England; but the whole matter of jurisdiction was so confused even to the Sacred Congregation, that it was "tabled for want of precedent," and was placed before the Holy See for decision.<sup>16</sup> All that can be gathered from the correspondence on this case is that the Provincial himself was left in doubt by Rome's decision: "It will be hard to find under which V.A. Maryland is—London too far—Quebec are foreigners."<sup>17</sup>

On November 28, 1723, the English Provincial obtained from Bishop Giffard for Father Attwood of Maryland—a number of spiritual powers for the missionaries in Maryland. It is important to note, as Father Hughes has pointed out, that Bishop Giffard

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

<sup>15</sup> HUGHES, *A Maryland Marriage Case*, in the *American Ecclesiastical Review*, vol. xxii (May, 1902), pp. 521-538.

<sup>16</sup> HUGHES, *History of the Jesuits, etc.*, Text, vol. ii, p. 587.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 387.

in this instance "likewise confirmed, ratified, and gave (in case there is, or has been, any deficiency in any one or all) power and jurisdiction to each and all of the missionaries, who are now there residing, to exercise these functions."<sup>18</sup> Why Bishop Giffard should give this retroactive delegation, without the same being solicited by the Maryland priests, is singular. On December 10, 1723, Giffard's vicar-general gave his approbation to a new missionary for Maryland, Father James Case, S.J., and in the interview with Fathers Case and Attwood, he said he did not see why the missionaries in Maryland should not enjoy all the privileges granted to the priests in England, his reason being, that Maryland was "part of and belonging to, the London District."<sup>19</sup> "It is not likely," Burton writes, "that Bishop Giffard would suddenly have begun to exercise faculties in these remote lands without the sanction of Propaganda in some shape. Yet there is no record in the Westminster Archives of any formal document to that effect."<sup>20</sup>

We have here the first recorded claim of the London District for juridic control of the Church in the colonies. Two years later, on March 17, 1725, the English Provincial writes at length to Father George Thorold, S.J., the Superior in America, reaffirming all the faculties conferred upon his predecessors; but "as to the faculties you have from me, I can't give you so clear an answer. You may read the *Compendium Privilegiorum* and then conclude that you have all the powers which the Provincial can give you. If . . . you have any doubt about some of them, you may send your doubts to be examined here."<sup>21</sup> Finally, on November 20, 1730, a series of faculties (thirteen in all) were granted by Dr. Giffard to Thorold and to his successors for five years. The "benign response" of Bishop Giffard to the various applications made by the American missionaries created what Father Hughes calls jurisdiction by devolution from a negation. "Most cordial were the relations between the American missionaries and Bishop Giffard, *who was first installed by common*

<sup>18</sup> *Dublin Review*, I. c., p. 69.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>20</sup> My own researches in the *Westminster Archives* and in the Archives of the Chapter, at Hammersmith, London, failed to throw any light on this problem.

<sup>21</sup> HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Text, vol. II, p. 555.

*consent and mutual complaisance as the Episcopal authority over Maryland.*"<sup>22</sup>

Nevertheless, all this was irregular according to the canon law of the Church. We hear no more of it until the year 1743, when Bishop Petre (who had succeeded Dr. Giffard) and his coadjutor, Bishop Challoner, seem to have decided to transfer the burden of the American colonies to other shoulders.<sup>23</sup> At the end of 1742 or in the beginning of 1743, Dr. Petre suggested to the English Jesuit Provincial, Father Charles Shireburn, the plan of making the Jesuit Superior in Maryland a Vicar-General of the London District. The proposal was not sufficiently clear to Father Shireburn, and he consulted the General, Father Retz, through Father Charles Roels, then at Liège. The general's reply was to the effect that if the vicar-generalship contemplated only such matters as dispensations, absolutions and the like, the Superior might accept the charge. If it were to mean quasi-episcopal jurisdiction, then the Holy See would have to be asked to dispense the Maryland Superior, since it was against the Jesuit Constitutions for one of their Society to accept ecclesiastical dignities. Father Retz gave his preference by suggesting that some one, not a Jesuit, be nominated for the post, one, however, who would be under the obligation of seeking the counsel and approbation of the Jesuit Superior.<sup>24</sup> Even though there had been a priest, not a Jesuit, in the colonies at that date, eligible for the post of vicar-general, this last suggestion is a most surprising one to come from the head of the Society, for it was just such an alleged arrangement which had proved the strongest weapon in the hands of the enemies of the Jesuits in England in the century previous.<sup>25</sup> Basing his statement on Grassi's *Memorie sulla Compagnia di Gesù, restabilita negli Stati Uniti*, where we are told that the author saw in the sacristy of St. Thomas's Church at Port Tobacco, 1812, a patent granting extraordinary faculties, including that of administering the Sacrament of Confirmation, to the Jesuit missionaries, Father Hughes concludes that the vicar-apostolic may have acted upon the

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<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 589 (Italics ours).

<sup>23</sup> HUGHES, *American Ecclesiastical Review*, vol. xxii, p. 524.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 525.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. POLLEN, *Archpriest, etc.*, pp. 27-29.

general's decision. This faculty had been conferred upon the Jesuit missionaries in various parts of the world by Pope Benedict XIV, in a series of pontifical briefs between 1751 and 1753, and it would have been proper for Bishop Petre to have secured such a faculty for the Jesuits in the American colonies.

Gradually all the spiritual work being carried on by the missionaries of the various Orders in English territory was being centralized under the jurisdiction of the vicars-apostolic. In 1745, the Holy See issued a decree confirming the *Alias a particulari* of Innocent XII and making it incumbent upon all the religious (including the Jesuits) to secure faculties from the vicars-apostolic of their respective districts; and a letter (August 23, 1748) promulgating the decree made it quite clear that "it would not be lawful for anyone to exercise any faculties in their districts except those received from the bishops." The bishops then confirmed all existing faculties. This letter was not accepted with alacrity. Opposition in England was strongly advocated by the Franciscans, Carmelites, and Benedictines. The English Jesuits, and in consequence those in the American colonies, since they depended on the English Provincial, requested a delay until they had communicated with their Superiors in Rome.<sup>26</sup> The Brief *Apostolicum Ministerium* of May 30, 1753, issued by Pope Benedict XIV, was a "final" settlement of the question of jurisdiction in English ecclesiastical life. Known better under the name of the *Regulae observandae in Anglicanis Missionibus*, Pope Benedict's decree was virtually a Constitution of the Clergy in England down to the restoration of the Hierarchy in 1850.

This background explains all that follows.

The question now arises, did Challoner, who was to succeed at Bishop Petre's death, on December 22, 1758, and who was then (1753) virtually in charge of the London District, understand the decree as applicable to the Pennsylvania-Maryland Jesuit Mission? It would seem that he did; for, he had been actively interested in the American Mission since 1743. Ten years later, the question of episcopal jurisdiction in the colonies was taken up seriously by the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide.

<sup>26</sup> The story of this opposition will be found in detail in BURTON, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 258-269.

A report in Propaganda Archives, dated February 15, 1753, contains the following uncertain, though significant, statement on this question: "Whence the said priests received their faculties the present writer can give no information. He believes, however, that they get them from the Vicars-Apostolic of London; and he thinks he heard before that the Sacred Congregation had assigned this charge to the said Vicar. . . . As to the English provinces on the mainland, the greatest number of Catholics are in Maryland, where the English Jesuit Fathers have a numerous mission. . . . It is supposed that the missionaries of this province are under the care of a prefect appointed by the Provincial of the Jesuits in England."<sup>27</sup>

We have then a quasi-starting place in the year 1753. A singular state of affairs existed. It is evident that the two vicars-apostolic of London (Dr. Petre and Dr. Challoner) believed the American colonies to be part of their District and under their episcopal jurisdiction. Their effort in 1743 to rid themselves of the burden of the colonies is the only proof needed. It is likewise clear that Propaganda did not consider the colonies as part of the London District. The *Regulae observandae* were interpreted by Dr. Petre and Dr. Challoner as applying to the American colonies. The faculties of 1751-53 especially for the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation granted by Pope Benedict XIV are in this sense in contradiction to the *Apostolicum ministerium*. The American Jesuits had, since Dr. Giffard's day (1703-34), shown a marked and growing tendency to appeal directly to the London vicar-apostolic. A further complication arises in 1756, when Bishop Challoner began a struggle of twenty-five years to have a vicar-apostolic appointed somewhere in the English colonies, either in the West Indies or in Maryland, because the faithful there, "were destitute of the sacrament of Confirmation." On September 14, 1756, Dr. Challoner wrote to the English Clergy Agent at Rome, Dr. Stonor, giving a report of the state of religion in the American settlements:

There are no missioners in any of our colonies upon the continent, excepting Mariland and Pensilvania; in which the exercise of the Catholic

<sup>27</sup> *Propaganda Archives, America, Antille*, vol. i, ff. 420-421.



religion is in some measure tolerated. I have had different accounts as to their numbers in Mariland where they are the most numerous. By one account they were about 5,000 communicants; another makes them amount to about 7,000; but perhaps the latter might design to include those in Pensilvania; where I believe there may be about 2,000. There are about 12 missionaries in Mariland, and four in Pensilvania, all of them of the Society. These also assist some few Catholics in Virginia, upon the borders of Mariland, and in N. Jersey bordering upon Pensilvania. As to the rest of the provinces upon the continent, N. England, N. York, etc., if there be any straggling Catholics, they can have no exercise of their religion, as no priests ever come near them; nor, to judge by what appears to be the present disposition of the inhabitants, are ever like to be admitted amongst them.

As to the islands, the state of religion is much worse than on the continent. The Catholics we have there are chiefly Irish; and neither priests nor people are half so regular as the Marilandians and Pensilvanians are. In Jamaica there are many Catholics and two priests in our time have made some attempt to settle there, but could not succeed. The inhabitants are looked upon to be generally almost abandoned, wicked people. In Barbadoes there was an Irish Augustinian who apostatized. The few Catholics there have sometimes been helped from Montserrat. This latter, which is one of the least of our Islands, has the greatest number of Catholics, such as they are, under the care of two Irish missionaries; but little or nothing is done by them with relation to the care of their negroes who are numerous. There are also some Irish Catholics in the Islands of Antigoa, under the care of a Dominican, who happens to be now in town, and gives us a very indifferent account of the practice of religion among his countrymen there. There are also a few Catholics in the island of St. Christopher's, who are helped sometimes from Montserrat. And not long ago an Irish Augustinian took out faculties here to go and settle in Newfoundland, for the help of a number of his countrymen that were drawn thither by the fishing trade. I take no notice of the neutral French and Indians in Acadia who had their priests from Canada, but have been lately translated hither upon occasion of this present war.

*All our settlements in America have been deemed subject in spirituals to the ecclesiastical Superiors here, and this has been time out of mind, even, I believe, from the time of the Archpriests.* I know not the origin of this, nor have ever met with the original grant. I suppose they were looked upon as appurtenances or appendixes of the English Mission. And, after the division of this kingdom into four districts, the jurisdiction over the Catholics in those settlements has followed the London district (as they are all reputed by the English as part of the London diocese); I suppose because London is the capital of the British Empire; and from hence are the most frequent opportunities of a proper correspondence with all those settlements. Whether the Holy See has ordered anything in this regard, I cannot learn. But all the missionaries in those settlements do now, and have, time out of mind, applied to the Vicar-Apostolic here for their

faculties, which is true of the *padri also* [the Jesuits] in Mariland and Pensilvania; at least from the time of the Breve of Innocent XIV in 1696, only that they used rather to ask for approbation, but now also for faculties.

Some have wished, considering the number of the faithful, especially in those two provinces, destitute of the Sacrament of confirmation, and lying at so great a distance from us, that a bishop or vicar-apostolic should be appointed for them. But how far this may be judged practicable by our superiors I know not: especially as perhaps it may not be relished, by those who have engrossed the best part of the mission to themselves, and who may, not without show of probability, object that a novelty of this kind might give offence to the governing part there; who have been a little hard upon them of late years. This with my respects you will be pleased to communicate to Mr. Larker from his and your servant in Christ.<sup>28</sup>

This information was laid before Propaganda and an immediate search was made in the Archives for the origin of this presumed episcopal authority over the colonies; with the following result:

No document is found in these archives to show that the charge of despatching missionaries to the islands or mainland of America was ever invested in the Archpriests of England, prior to the foundation of this Sacred Congregation; nor again in the Vicars-Apostolic who were appointed for that kingdom after the said date; nor that any superintendence over the missionaries or the missions was committed to them. Rather from the precedents which are on file in these archives, it appears that whenever, during the last century, any missionary had to be sent to the islands of America governed by the English, it was this Congregation that granted the missionary his letters patent; and it was the Holy Office [the Inquisition] which granted him his faculties; or else the matter was given in charge to the Cardinal Protector of England, who in those times was provided with ample faculties.

When in 1688 there were appointed four Vicars-Apostolic in England, a division of districts was made; and within the limits defined each was to exercise jurisdiction. Then, in the briefs despatched to each, there were enumerated the counties assigned in the division; just as is done at present in appointments to the said vicariates.

Now in that of London it is expressly said: "Having jurisdiction in the county of Kent, Middlesex, Essex, Surrey, Hartford, Sussex, Berkshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, in the Isle of Wight, in the Isles of Jersey and Guernsey."

Hence, since the places are expressly named where the Vicar-Apostolic

<sup>28</sup> *Westminster Archives, Epistola Variorum*, vol. xiii, no. 135.

of London ought to exercise jurisdiction, this cannot be extended to America. Nor is that reason adduced of any value that, when the division of the four districts was made in the time of James II, it was believed that the English colonies were comprised in the London district; seeing that this is to be understood of islands adjacent, and not of those in America.<sup>29</sup>

The consequence of this correspondence was that in 1757, Bishop Petre's faculties were formally extended to the American colonies. This arrangement is chronicled in a memorandum sent by Challoner to Propaganda in 1763: "The vicar-apostolic of London thought that he could exercise jurisdiction in the colonies and islands subject to the English Crown in America. When the Sacred Congregation asked him, in 1756, by what authority he did so, he answered that he had no document to that effect; but he had taken his stand on a supposition that such missions depended on him. Thereupon a relation being submitted about the state of the Catholic religion in the said islands and colonies, the Sacred Congregation, with the assent of the Pope, made good the acts up to that time; and for the future gave him power to exercise his faculties for six years in the same islands and colonies; and this jurisdiction was renewed for him, March 25th, 1759. When this affair was brought under consideration in 1756, there was some idea of having a vicar-apostolic appointed in America, to exercise jurisdiction over the English settlements. But for the time being the matter was allowed to lie over, and the above arrangement was made for six years."<sup>30</sup>

To sum up the documentary evidence given thus far on this question: Bishop Challoner's proposal to have a vicar-apostolic appointed in the American colonies was not unfavourably received by the officials of Propaganda. The first thing necessary, however, was a validation of the authority exercised by the London vicars. For that reason, Propaganda had replied that a diligent search had not revealed any document in the Archives at Rome to show that this authority had been invested either with the archpriests or with the vicars-apostolic. As Propaganda understood the situation, every missionary in America had derived his faculties either from the Sacred Congregation itself, or from the

<sup>29</sup> *Propaganda Archives, America, Antille*, vol. i, ff. 422-423.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, *America, Antille*, vol. ii, ff. 27-28.

Holy Office, or from the Cardinal Protector of England. In its reply of 1757, Propaganda points out, in the quotation given above, that the limits of the London District went no farther west than the Channel Islands. Consequently Bishop Petre's faculties were extended *ad sexennium* to the American colonies and to the English West Indies. Dr. Challoner's effort to rid himself of the colonies only ended by fastening the burden more tightly upon his own shoulders. When he succeeded Dr. Petre (December 22, 1758) he was in doubt whether his legacy of responsibility included America, and he wrote to Propaganda, receiving on March 31, 1759, an affirmative answer, with faculties similar to those of Dr. Petre, again *ad sexennium*.

Meanwhile the problem underwent a change. In 1756, the last phase of the hundred years' war for the political control of the North American continent began, and General Wolfe's capture of Quebec in 1759, brought Canada within the radius of English possession and rule. Spain, too, added to the victor's winnings by yielding the great peninsula of Florida and some of the West Indies to England. "In consequence of this increase in British territory Bishop Challoner had now to consider whether under the terms of his faculties he was or was not responsible for the spiritual well-being of Canada and the other new possessions."<sup>31</sup> On May 20, 1763, he wrote to Dr. Stonor, asking him to place before the Propaganda officials the question: "Under whose jurisdiction as to spirituals are these new acquisitions to be?" Propaganda replied on July 9, 1763, stating that the matter was of such importance that fresh information must be had before a decision could be rendered. Bishop Challoner's reply, dated London, August 2, 1763, is a precious document, since it contains all the information he possessed on the subject at that time. It runs as follows:

London, August 2, 1763

*Most Eminent Father:*

In compliance with the wish of the Sacred Congregation, I will set forth briefly, as well as the remoteness of those parts permits us to

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<sup>31</sup> BURTON, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 132. There was no bishop in Quebec at the time. Bishop Pontbriand died in June, 1760, and his successor, Bishop Briand, was consecrated in 1766. Cf. TÊTU, *op. cit.*, pp. 256ss.



know, the conditions of our Missions in America. The British Colonies in America, which the Holy See has placed under the jurisdiction of the Vicar Apostolic of London, are partly on the Continent and partly on the Islands. On the Continent they occupy the very extensive Provinces of Nova Scotia, New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Carolina and Georgia. But in these most flourishing colonies, if you except Pennsylvania and Maryland, there is no exercise of the Catholic religion, and consequently no missionaries, the law and civil authorities prohibiting it. In Pennsylvania and Maryland the exercise of religion is free; and Jesuits, holding faculties from us, conduct the missions there in a very laudable manner. There are about twelve missionaries in Maryland, and as they say about sixteen thousand Catholics, including children; and in Pennsylvania, about six or seven thousand under five missionaries. Some of these missionaries also make excursions into the neighbouring Provinces, Jersey on the one side, Virginia on the other, and secretly administer the Sacraments to the Catholics living there.

It is to be desired that provision should be made for so many thousand Catholics as are found in Maryland and Pennsylvania, that they may receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, of the benefit of which they are utterly deprived. Now that Canada and Florida are brought under the English sway, the Holy Apostolic See could easily effect this, a Bishop or a Vicar Apostolic being established at Quebec or elsewhere, with the consent of our Court, by delegating jurisdiction to him throughout all the other English colonies and islands in America. This would be far from displeasing to us, and would redound greatly to the advantage of those colonies.

There are many islands in America under the British sway, *viz*: Newfoundland, Bermuda, Bahama, Jamaica, Barbadoes, Antigua, St. Kitts, Nevis, Montserrat, etc.: but the number of those who profess the Catholic faith in these islands is very small. Its exercise is tolerated nowhere scarcely, except in Montserrat, where there are at this time three Irish missionaries, but holding faculties from us. In the other islands above named there are at this time no priests, but some of them are visited from time to time by the missionaries of Montserrat, but it is to be deplored that many of the Catholics on these islands seem to have very little regard for their religion, and when they can, show an unwillingness to maintain and support a missionary among them; and certainly to this day we have never been able to ascertain anything of the Peter Lembec who, in a Spanish letter to the Sacred Congregation, offered to carry a priest at his own expense to Jamaica and maintain him. There was also, for a time, an Irish missionary with faculties from us in the island of Newfoundland, on the Northern Ocean, but when the last war broke out he was expelled by the Protestants.

The islands which by the terms of the recent treaty the French have ceded to the English, are Granada, Grenadina, St. Vincent's, Dominica, and Tobago, in which the exercise of the Catholic religion is served;



but we are entirely ignorant of the present state of the Catholic religion in them, or what the ecclesiastical government is.

To obey the commands of the Sacred Congregation, I have briefly set these forth, and with all reverence I subscribe myself,

Most Sacred Father,  
Your Eminence's most obedient servant,  
✠ RICHARD, *Vicar Apostolic*.<sup>32</sup>

Like all letters destined for Rome, this report passed through the hands of the Papal Nuncio at Brussels, but it never reached Propaganda, either going astray, or, as Challoner suspected, being confiscated by the British secret service. The important message it contains for the American historian is that: "It is to be desired that provision should be made for so many thousand Catholics who are found in Maryland and Pennsylvania, *that they may receive the Sacrament of Confirmation of the benefit of which they are utterly deprived.*" Challoner again urged the appointment of a Bishop or of a Vicar-Apostolic, to be located beyond the Proclamation Line of 1763, so as to be under the protection of the British Government. Cardinal Castelli, Prefect of Propaganda, wrote again asking for a report on the colonies, and Dr. Challoner sent a duplicate on March 15, 1764, repeating his former request. "If matters there (Canada) were once properly settled, I wish our friends could think of charging the person to be chosen, or some other with the title of vicar-apostolic, with the care of those other colonies which we at this distance cannot properly assist, and which are *now quite deprived of the Sacrament of Confirmation.*"<sup>33</sup> Again, on August 28, 1764, Dr. Challoner wrote to the English Clergy Agent at Rome requesting "an *éclaircissement* with regard to these new acquired islands . . . and . . . Florida."<sup>34</sup> From the general tenor of these letters it might be inferred that Challoner was troubled more about the English West Indies than about Maryland and Pennsylvania, but it was the mainland and not the islands which was in his mind at all times. Religious conditions in the islands were actually deplorable, and it served his purpose

<sup>32</sup> *Westminster Archives, Papers, 1761-1765*. This translation (made by Shea) will be found in *Researches*, vol. xii, pp. 44-45.

<sup>33</sup> *Westminster Archives, Epistola Variorum*, vol. xiv, no. 73.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, *Epistola Variorum*, vol. xiv, no. 77.

to use their condition as a motive for the real wish he had at heart—to rid himself of America entirely. The colonies were of no appreciable value to the London vicar-apostolic, and he would have been far above the average of his time, had he continued to feel an interest in a group, “beyond the seas,” that brought him nothing but difficulty. Propaganda replied again on Christmas Eve, 1764, giving Dr. Challoner the necessary faculties, but deferring the appointment of a separate vicariate to the future.<sup>35</sup> The situation remained in this *status quo* down to the outbreak of the American Revolution and continued in fact until Carroll’s appointment as prefect in 1784. About this time, however, the scene is changed to the American colonies and we have now to witness another cause for this postponement.

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<sup>35</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Lettere (1764)*, vol. cciv, ff. 599.

CHAPTER XI  
OPPOSITION TO THE AMERICAN BISHOPRIC  
(1765-1784)

Between 1756, when Dr. Challoner began the correspondence with Rome which had for its purpose the reorganization of American jurisdiction, and 1765, when he was thwarted in his desire to set up a separate ecclesiastical system in the colonies and the islands, his plea for the appointment of an American bishop or vicar-apostolic was based mainly on the need of the Sacrament of Confirmation. The first letter of the series already quoted contains a charge against the Jesuits, and Challoner intimates rather broadly that to set up a vicar-apostolic or a Bishop in the American provinces might not be "relished by those who have engrossed the best part of that mission to themselves, and who may, not without show of probability, object that a novelty of this kind might give offence to the governing part there; who have been a little hard upon them in late years."<sup>1</sup> The same statement, hidden in this case at the end of a long letter, will soon overtake the arguments he offers for the establishment of an American Church: namely, the great distance which did not permit him to make a visitation in America; his constant lack of information which hinders him from directing the Church there; the destitute state of the people (*totalmente privi*), on account of the lack of the Sacrament of Confirmation; and his inability to send a representative there by reason of the distance and the expense. A letter to Dr. Stonor, who was then at Douay, dated London, February 15, 1765, contains the same charge in stronger terms:

What you add of settling two or three Vicars-Apostolic in that part of the world, is an object that certainly deserves the attention of our friends [Propaganda]. But I foresee the execution of it will meet with

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<sup>1</sup> *Westminster Archives, Epistolæ Variorum*, vol. xiii, no. 135.

very great difficulties, especially in Mariland and Pennsylvania, where the Padri have had so long possession, and will hardly endure a Priest, much less a Bishop of any other institute: nor indeed do I know of any one of ours that would be fond of going amongst them, nor of any of them that would be proper for that station, who could be spared by us in our present circumstances.<sup>2</sup>

On May 31, 1765, Bishop Challoner returned to the subject with his Roman agent, lamenting the lack of Confirmation among his American subjects. He felt certain that the authorities at Rome would not allow the situation to remain, since, "'tis morally impossible for us to have a proper superintendence over places so remote. And to let so many thousand Catholics as there are in some of our northern Colonies remain entirely destitute of the Sacrament of Confirmation is what, I am sure, our friends will never suffer."<sup>3</sup>

The Jesuit historian, Father Thomas Campbell, who deals with this aspect of the question in his article, *The Beginnings of the Hierarchy in the United States*, says "This is a very formidable arraignment; the great sanctity of Bishop Challoner gives unusual weight to this already grave charge, and there are few who will not be ready to admit—for we all reverence his authority—that there must have been a solid reason for what such a great and good man so solemnly declares, and at the end of two years again insists upon."<sup>4</sup> It was at this juncture in the negotiations between London and Rome that the American Jesuits, though apparently uninvited, interposed a remonstrance against the appointment of a bishop.

Let us see what the actual political and religious conditions in America were, before taking up this remonstrance. The reader has but to peruse Hughes' interesting chapters on Maryland and Pennsylvania<sup>5</sup> to realize that the Catholics in these States were then living through the worst period of the anti-Catholicism of eighteenth century colonial history. So violent had the persecutions become that more than one influential group of

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, *Epistolæ Variorum*, vol. xiv, no. 81. Shea transcribes this document (*op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 56) to read *prefect* instead of *priest*. The original has: "pt. much less a B. of any other institute." I take the abbreviation to stand for *priest*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, *Epistolæ Variorum*, vol. xiv, no. 83.

<sup>4</sup> In the *Historical Records and Studies*, vol. i (1899), pp. 251-277.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, Text, vol. ii, pp. 435-564.

Catholics had contemplated a general exile-movement—they and their forebears not accustomed to it—either to the West Indies, or to the Arkansas district of old Louisiana, or to Louisiana itself. The Catholic Petition of 1758 to Governor Sharpe of Maryland accused the provincial Government of having reduced the Catholics to the level of the negroes, “not having the privilege of voting for persons to represent us in the Assembly.” It was the year previous, that Charles Carroll, the father of Carrollton, began negotiations with the Court of France for a grant of land on the Arkansas river. Apart from this general condition of things, Dr. Challoner was badly misled in speaking of “best places” in such a colony. There are extant several letters from Father Mosley to his relatives, of the years 1764 and 1766, which tell us of the hardships the Jesuit missionaries endured. In one of these he says:

Our journeys are very long, and our rides constant and extensive. . . . I often ride about three hundred miles a week, and never a week but I ride one hundred and fifty or two hundred miles. In our way of living we ride as much by night as by day; in all weathers, in heats, colds, rain, frost, and snow. You must not imagine that our chapels lie as yours do. . . . They are in great forests, some miles away from any house of hospitality. Swamps, runs, miry holes, lost in the night, etc.—this, as yet, and ever will in this country, attend us. Between three and four hundred miles was my last Christmas fare on one horse.<sup>6</sup>

The truth is that Dr. Challoner was echoing, unconsciously perhaps, one of the main charges in the quarrel which had disturbed Catholic England for two centuries, the old Regular-Secular fight for power; but his charges against the Jesuits displayed his simple ignorance of American conditions. It seems strange that he should accuse the Fathers of an unwillingness to receive any stranger among them, when he admits almost in the next paragraph that he had no missionaries to send out to the colonies. The English colonies were not a desirable place for any priest at that date. Even Carroll himself, when writing as bishop thirty years later to Archbishop Troy to solicit labourers for his vineyard, warns those who come that only hardships and priva-

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<sup>6</sup> *Letters of Father Joseph Mosley, S.J., and some Extracts from His Diary (1757-1786)*, compiled by Rev. E. I. Devitt, S.J., in the *Records*, vol. xvii, pp. 118-210, 289-311.



tions awaited them. This charge of selfishness we can pass over. It scarcely needs an answer, since it is at variance with the truth. But the second charge is more serious, and it is again a repetition under another form of that age-old accusation in England against the Society, namely, that it tends towards a presbyterian form of church government. Several documents apparently support Bishop Challoner in his stand. The first is the *Laity Remonstrance* of July 16, 1765, signed by Charles Carroll of Annapolis, Ignatius Digges, Henry Darnall, (Father Carroll's grandfather), and two hundred and fifty-six leading Catholic laymen of Maryland, protesting against the appointment of an "Apostolical Vicar." The Remonstrance is sufficiently clear. It is as follows:

*Copy of ye Petition of ye R C to Mr. Dennett relating to V: A: Hond Sir:*

Haveing receivd intelligence yt a plan is on footing for sending into this province an Apostolical Vicar, we think it our duty to god, ourselves, & posterity to represent our objections against such a measure, as wt would give our adversaries, bent on our ruin, a stronger handle yn anything they have hitherto been able to lay hold on, and consequently terminate in the utter extirpation of our holy religion. The grounds of these our just fears & apprehensions are—1. The legislative power of this collony is so disposed with regard to those of our persuasion, as to have made many attempts of late years to put the most pernicious penal laws in force against us, and are still, every convention aiming more or less at something of yt kind. Would not the presence of An Apostl. Vicar afford a new and strong argument for further deliberations on this head? —2. Amongst the sundry motives alledged for putting the penal laws in force, one of the strongest and most urged was the too public exercise of our Divine worship, in so much that one of the gentlemen was obliged to quit the colony to avoid being summoned for a fact of that kind. Would not the functions of an Apostl. Vicar be deemed a more public, & open profession thereof than anything of that kind that could have been done hitherto? —3. The Genln. have no farther liberty for exercising their priestly functions yn in a private family, & that by a particular grant of Queen Ann suspending during the Royal pleasure ye execution of an act of Assembly, by wch. it was made high treason for any Priest to reside in the colony, wch. act still subsists, & will of course take place whenever the above grant is repeald. Would the functions of an Apostl. Vicar be interpreted functions of a Priest in a private family? 4. Neither this province, nor indeed any one of the British American colonys has ever hitherto had one of that Ecclesiastical rank & dignity. Would not our setting the 1st. example of yt kind appear very bold & presuming, if not also even dareing and insulting? Reflecting on these reasons

amongst several others we cannot but judge the above of sending us an Apostl. Vicar in the present situation of affairs would necessarily draw after it the utter destruction & extirpation of our H. religion out of this colony, & consequently compel us either to forfeit a great part of our estates & fortunes in order to retreat to another country, or utterly give up the exercise of our H: religion. We therefore by all that is sacred intreat you Hd: Sir, as head of the Genln. we have for our teachers, that you will be pleased to use all yr intrest to avert so fatal a measure, & as far as you judge necessary or proper for that purpose to transmit coppys hereof to all whom it may concern. In testimony whereof, and that the above are the true sentiments of ye Body of ye R: Catholics in Maryland we R: Caths. of the said province have hereunto set our hands this 16 day of July 1765.

C: CARROLL

IGN: DIGGES

HEN: DARNALL

Sign'd by 256 [others] †

The second document is a letter from Charles Carroll of Annapolis to Bishop Challoner, on the same day, informing him that the *Laity Remonstrance* would be presented to him by Father Dennett, the English Jesuit Provincial:

*Copy of ye address of ye R. C. relating to a V. A.*

ANNAPOLIS IN MARYLAND, July 16-1765.

My Lord:

The revd. Mr. Jos: Dennett will communicate to yr. Ldship a letter from many of the principal Rom: Caths: of Maryland drected to him, wherein they set forth a few of the many, and weighty reasons they have against the appointment of an Apostl: Vicar for America. Altho I have subscribed with others to that letter, other considerations have induced me singly to address myself to yr Ldship on the subject. Maryland has been settled above a 130 years, the Fathers of the Society accompanied the 1st settlers our fore fathers, and have from that Period to the present time very justly deserv'd our esteem, love, & gratitude, an uninterrupted peace & harmony has at all times as well as at the present subsisted between us & these our spiritual guides. Should an Apostl. Vicar, or Priest of any other Denomination be sent amongst us, I am fearful ye peace & harmony wch. has so long subsisted, will be very soon banished. I have many reasons to alledge agst. such a step, too tedious to trouble you with, and of wch. many must be obvious to yr. Ldship. Yr. Ldship must know, yt for many years past attempts have been made to establish a Protestant Bishop on this continent, and yt such attempts have been as constantly oppos'd thro the fixed aversion ye people of America in general

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† CAMPBELL, J. C., pp. 256-258.

have to a person of such a character. If such is the aversion of Protestants to a Protestant Bishop, with wt. an eye will they look upon an Apostl. Vicar? I am confident no one here has ever thought such a person necessary. Some may suggest yt this my letter to yr. Ldship as well as the R. Caths. Letter to Mr. Dennett has been wrote at the instigation of the Jesuits. For myself my Lord I most sincerely profess yt uninfluenced by them I write this & sign'd ye other letter, wch. contains not only my own but I am well convinced ye true sentiments of every Rom: Cathck. in Maryland. I writ it in order to continue in the enjoyment of my spiritual peace, & a quiet possession of my Temporal goods, and from these motives only, & I beg yr Ldship by the Dignity you hold in the Church, by the zeal you have for God's honour and glory, yt you would strenuously oppose by all means becoming yr Character, ye appointment of an Apostl. Vicar for America. But in case such a one should be appointed, I most earnestly beseech you, if possible to put a stop to his comeing hither, as such a step I am afraid will create great troubles here, & give a handle to our enemies to endeavour at the total suppression of the exercise of our Religion, & otherwise most grievously to molest us.

I have the honor to be, yr Ldships most obt. & most humble servt.

CHA: CARROLL.

P. S.—I have my lord sent coppies of this my letter to ye. Rd. Mr. Dennett in order yt he may coöperate with yr Ldship to prevent a step wch to me seems most fatal & pernicious.<sup>8</sup>

This letter, as the writer himself avows, was not influenced by the Jesuits in Maryland. The argument it carries, namely, the imprudence of sending a Catholic prelate to the colonies at that time, is familiar also to historians of the Episcopal Church in the United States. In his *Anglican Episcopate and the American Colonies*, Arthur Lyon Cross presents an historical situation almost identical to that of the Catholic clergy.<sup>9</sup> The Anglican Church in colonial America was ruled by the Bishop of London, and the attempts to create a colonial diocesan between 1638 and 1748, especially the efforts of Rev. John Talbot in 1702, not only met with failure, but also disclose a similarity of cause which corroborates the *Catholic Laity Remonstrance*. Only when the cleavage came in 1775 was it possible to hope for success. Dr. Cross corroborates Father Campbell's argument that "the fierce

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 258-259. Campbell ascribes this letter to Charles Carroll of Carrollton. The young barrister returned to America in February, 1765. His father, Charles Carroll of Annapolis was then the acknowledged leader in Catholic lay circles. Cf. ROWLAND, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 70.

<sup>9</sup> *Harvard Historical Studies*, vol. ix (New York, 1902). Dr. Cross neglected a strong argument for his thesis in ignoring the Catholic history of this period.

Puritanism of the colonies was then at white heat. It was raging furiously against prelacy of every kind, Protestant as well as Catholic, and the appointment of a Catholic bishop would have simply precipitated the Revolution."<sup>10</sup>

Bishop Challoner mentions the contents of Charles Carroll's letter and the Remonstrance in a letter to Stonor, dated September 12, 1765. He pigeonholed the document, excusing himself from sending it to Hilton, the *alias* for Rome:

I believe I never told you how much those gentlemen [the Jesuits] were alarmed upon hearing the first rumour of a Bishop being designed for North America and what opposition and subscriptions they procured from the laity there, which they would have had me to have sent to Hilton but I desired to be excused. By which I plainly see it will be no easy matter to place a Bishop there, although there be so many thousands there that live and die without confirmation. The state of the islands is still worse, as they are very indifferently served with Missioners, and it is not possible for us at this vast distance to inspect or correct their faults: and withal the circumstances are such that it would scarce be possible to fix a Bishop there.<sup>11</sup>

The matter remained at a standstill until the end of Challoner's life (January 10, 1781), although the London Vicar-Apostolic never wholly abandoned his project. There is a letter in poor French in the Westminster Diocesan Archives, not in Challoner's handwriting, but evidently dictated by him, dated June 25, 1770, to the effect that he would be willing to appoint the Bishop of Quebec (Briand) as his vicar-general to take care of the Catholics in the "lower colonies."

*Monseigneur:*

Le Zèle du Salut des Ames, et surtout de celles qui ont si recemment embrassé la Verité en l'Amérique Septentrionale, que Votre Grandeur a toujours fait paroître m'engage de vous adresser des Perssonnes qui se sont adressés ici à mon Ancien et moi pour nous demander du secours spirituel pour les Acadiens, qu'ils ne parlent que François et nous n'avons

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 264. Dr. Cross writes: "Undoubtedly, there is something to be said in favor of the argument that the attempt to introduce bishops and the opposition thereby excited, formed one of the causes of the Revolution. There can be no doubt that the opposition to bishops was based mainly on political grounds: this fact is indicated by the absence of any resistance to the establishment of an episcopate after the Revolution." Cf. TIFFANY, *A History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America*, p. 277. New York, 1895.

<sup>11</sup> *Westminster Archives, Epistola Variorum*, vol. xiv, no. 102.



que très peu de Prêtres qui soient habiles en cette langue. J'ai Vus plusieurs de cette partie de l'Amérique qui étoient Prisonniers à Southampton pendant la dernière Guerre, et j'ai admiré avec tous ceux, qui les connoissoient, leur Religion. Ils demandoient toujours en premier Lieu, comme ils devoient les secours spirituels, que leurs compatriotes vous demandent encore aujourd'hui. Nous avons alors fait ce que nous avons pu, pour eux, et Nous ne doutons aucunement que Vous ne fassiez ce meme à present. Que s'ils ne sont pas soumis à Votre Jurisdiction, il sera aisé d'obtenir de Rome les Pouvoirs nécessaires aux Prêtres; qui y seroient destinés. S'ils sont sujets de la Grande Bretagne comme leurs voisins de la Nouvelle Ecosse, et qu'ils n'ont pas d'ordinaire, nous pouvons nous même donner ces Pouvoirs. Ce que Je remarque pour faciliter l'approbation des Prêtres qu'on pourra envoyer, etc.<sup>12</sup>

It is in conjunction with this suggestion, as well as with the request from Rome that Bishop Briand visit the American colonies, administering Confirmation and overseeing ecclesiastical things in general, that a letter from Father Farmer, dated Philadelphia, April 22, 1773, to Father Bernard Well, refers.

The Cardinal-Prefect of Propaganda Fide wrote to Bishop Briand on September 7, 1771, asking him to administer Confirmation in the English colonies outside the Diocese of Quebec:

*Most Illustrious and Reverend Lord and Brother,*

From several relations which have reached us lately, the Sacred Congregation has learned that in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and other coterminous places there are found Catholics who, though in other matters are not suffering from the want of spiritual succor, have however not received the sacrament of Confirmation. The Most Eminent Fathers greatly desire to grant them this favour but they readily understand that their wish can hardly be realized unless your Lordship, as being the nearest Bishop, consent to assume this task and perform this remarkable office of charity. In their name, therefore, I earnestly beg of you cheerfully to undertake this burden agreeable to God and especially useful to our Faith, the faculties for which, solicited from our Most Holy Lord, you will find in the accompanying sheet. If you are so prevented by difficulties, as to be unable to fulfil this ministry in person I beg at least that you answer me as quickly as possible, informing me of any other appropriate manner in which that orthodox flock may be succored. Meanwhile I beseech God to long preserve your Lordship in health and welfare.

*Of Your Lordship*

*With brotherly greetings,*

JOSEPH MARIA CARD. CASTELLI, *Prefect,*  
STEPHEN BORGIA, *Secretary.*<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, *Epistola Variorum*,—in a small copy-book inserted in vol. i.

<sup>13</sup> *Researches*, vol. xxi, pp. 133-134.



Together with this letter came special faculties for Bishop Briand in case he should accede to Castelli's request:

In an audience of our Most Holy Lord Pope Clement XIV, obtained by me, the undersigned, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith [Propaganda] on the first of September, 1771.

Our Most Holy Lord in accordance with the report presented by me the undersigned, and considering the special reasons alleged, has granted the Reverend Lord Henri Du Breil de Pontbriand,<sup>14</sup> Bishop of Quebec in North America, the faculty to administer the sacrament of Confirmation to the Catholics living without his diocese, namely, in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and other coterminous places, and has declared that the said faculty is to last for ten years only.

Given at Rome on the day and in the year as above.

STEPHEN BORGIA, *Secretary*.

Bishop Briand acknowledged the receipt of this letter on October 15, 1772, telling the Cardinal-Prefect that as soon as the Governor of Quebec should return from London he would endeavour to obtain permission to go to Maryland and Philadelphia "to do my best to fulfil the mission with which it pleases His Holiness to honour me. Meanwhile I shall write to some missionaries in that country to forewarn them."<sup>15</sup> Instead of writing personally, Bishop Briand commissioned Father Bernard Well to write to one of the Jesuits in Philadelphia to this effect. Father Farmer's answer is one of the very interesting side-lights we possess for this period.

*Philadelphia, 22nd. April, 1773*

*Reverend Father in Christ,*

*P. C. [Pax Christi]*

Your Reverence's most welcome letter, dated February 15, was delivered to me on the 17th of April. In the absence of Rev. Father Diderick I opened it, according to directions given in the address. The above mentioned Father had been in one of the Pennsylvania Missions, a hundred or more miles distant from Philadelphia; having, in a private discussion with a non-Catholic man, made use of some rather harsh and insulting words, he came nigh being killed, a musket having been twice discharged

<sup>14</sup> There is an error in the name. Bishop de Pontbriand died in 1760. His death coincides with the fall of New France. His successor, Bishop Jean-Oliver Briand, occupied the see from 1766 to 1784. Propaganda may not have been cognizant of Bishop Pontbriand's death, which occurred eleven years before the issuance of these faculties.

<sup>15</sup> *Researches*, vol. xxi, p. 135.

by night on his dwelling or chapel. Wherefore he was obliged to remove to the Missions in the Province of Maryland. I shall, in due time, send him your Reverence's letter. Your Reverence desires to know the state of our Missions. I shall describe them briefly. In only two of the several English Provinces or Colonies is the Catholic Religion tolerated, namely in Maryland and Pennsylvania; in the latter in virtue of a Royal Charter given to the founder of the Colony; in the former, more from ancient possession than owing to any right. In Pennsylvania, by virtue of a Royal deed, all religions are tolerated, not that each one is free to perform publicly the rites of his religion, but in this sense that he may accomplish them in private, and that he may be in no wise compelled by anyone to share in any exercise whatsoever of another Religion than his own.

As, however, the oath that must be exacted of all such as desire to be numbered among the born subjects of the kingdom, or who hold divers offices in the Commonwealth, contains a renunciation of the Catholic religion, none of our faith can obtain the like favors. In Pennsylvania there are presently five Missionaries, one Englishman and four Germans, who attend with no mean labor to small congregations of men nearly all poor and widely scattered throughout the Province. In Philadelphia, however, where reside two missionaries, there is a greater number of souls comprising men of different nationalities. In Maryland, there are both more missionaries and a greater and better number of faithful, but, as I already mentioned, they enjoy less liberty than that which we here enjoy. All of these Missionaries are of our Society; the Superior resides in Maryland. I shall have to consult him regarding the matter treated in your Reverence's letter. But as a prompt answer is requested, until the Reverend Father Superior can examine the question and advise thereon, I beg to express my own sentiment.

From the foregoing it is easy to see that the Catholic Religion is practised with far greater authority and freedom in Canada than in our own country. Wherefore it is most certain that the advent in our midst of the Right Reverend and Illustrious [Bishop of Quebec] would create great disturbances, with the danger of depriving us of the paltry privileges we are now enjoying, especially in Maryland, where, as already mentioned, the exercise, even in private, of our Religion rests upon no authority. For the same reason, when several years ago, the Vicar-Apostolic of London intended to send some one hither for the purpose either of visiting or of giving Confirmation, the gentlemen of Maryland placed under our care, by a letter written to the Right Reverend Vicar, informed him of the danger to which they were exposed; wherefore the aforesaid Vicar, under whom are all these colonies, gave up his intention.

I do not wish you to understand by this that we are not greatly desirous of having Confirmation administered to those of our flock born in this country, but that it is plain to our eyes, being given especially the character of Americans, that such rite could not safely be conferred by a person established in dignity. For it is incredible how hateful to non-

Catholics in all parts of America is the very name of Bishop, even to such as should be members of the Church which is called Anglican. Whence many considered it a most unworthy measure that a Bishop be granted to the Canadians; and, as for several years past the question is being agitated in England of establishing in these Provinces a Protestant Bishop of the Anglican Communion, so many obstacles were found, due especially to the character of the Americans (of whom most of the early colonists were dissidents from the Anglicans, not to mention such as left our own faith) that nothing has as yet been effected. Hardly I can persuade myself that the Right Reverend [Bishop] might succeed in obtaining from the Governor of Canada or from the King, the faculty of exercising his power beyond the limits of the Provinces belonging formerly to the Canadian government, and lately ceded by treaty to the English.

From Europe we have received no letters for several months past, so that we are ignorant as to what may be the state of our society. However, from what we learned last year from Ours, and also from what the newspapers announce, we justly infer that our interests in Rome are not succeeding favourably, though that doth succeed favourably whichever it pleaseth Divine Providence to ordain.

Your Reverence will excuse me for not having written this more neatly, as in this city, especially at the present time, we are very busy with the various labours of our ministry. I earnestly recommend myself in all holy intentions.

*Of Your Reverence,  
The most humble servant in Christ,*

FERDINAND FARMER, S. J.

P. S.—My Reverend colleague, Father Robert Mollineux, most cordially greets your Reverence. Should it please ye to send me other letters, they may be addressed as follows:

*To Mr. Ferdinand Farmer,  
Walnut Street,  
Philadelphia.<sup>16</sup>*

Such a solution of the difficulty as that of sending Bishop Briand on a "progress" through the American Colonies was impossible. Even though there had been no intolerant spirit at work, it is highly probable that his presence would have given offense to American clergy.<sup>17</sup> The Suppression of the Jesuits

<sup>16</sup> The original of this letter (in Latin) is in the *Archiepiscopal Archives* at Quebec. *Miscellaneous*, pp. 144-145. The translation given here will be found in *Researches*, vol. xxi, pp. 118-120.

<sup>17</sup> Dr. Cross quotes an interesting letter (*op. cit.*, p. 256, note 3) from the Fulham MSS., written by Mr. Martyn to the Bishop of London, dated South Carolina, October 20, 1765: "If I may form a Judgment from the present prevailing turbulent Spirit through this and other colonies, I can venture to affirm that it would be as unsafe for an American Bishop (if such should be appointed) to come hither, as it is at present for a Distributor of the Stamps."

that same year (1773), and the outbreak of the Revolution (1775) added further complications to the problems of juridic ecclesiastical control over the Church in the English Colonies. The delay in Carroll's appointment must be viewed not from the standpoint of indifference or apathy on the part of Rome, but solely from motives of policy. The Holy See realized the grave danger to church discipline which might arise in the absence of a canonically appointed Superior, but there was nothing to gain in forcing the issue upon the rebellious colonies. Moreover, it was prudent to await the outcome of the war. It is to John Carroll's credit that, when the Church here was finally organized under his leadership, he quickly gained control of all elements that might have caused disorder. For the next ten years—"ten years of inaction" Hughes calls them—the administration of the Church in the colonies was practically paralysed. The work in the American vineyard went on in a listless way, as it was bound to, without a shepherd, and manned by a little group of priests who had been dishonoured and disbanded by the Holy See.

## CHAPTER XII

### CHURCH ADMINISTRATION DURING THE WAR

(1775-1784)

Theoretically, during the American Revolution, the London Vicars-Apostolic (Dr. Challoner, 1759-1781, Dr. Talbot, 1781-1784), were the Superiors of the Catholic clergy and laity in the "Thirteen Provinces of America." Canon Burton writes that "it is indeed a strange and curious fact to remember, but it is none the less true, that, during the rest of Bishop Challoner's life, his jurisdiction over his American priests and people remained the only remnant of authority in the hands of an Englishman that was still recognized in America. King and Parliament and Ministry had lost their power, but this feeble old man, living his retired life in an obscure London street, still continued to issue his faculties and dispensations for the benefit of his Catholic children in Maryland and Pennsylvania."<sup>1</sup> Practically, however, the outbreak of the War resulted in the stoppage of all juridic relationship between London and the Maryland-Pennsylvania Mission.

There is no document in the Westminster Diocesan Archives or in the ecclesiastical archives in the United States to show any distinctive use by Bishop Challoner of his faculties in the matter of dispensations and subdelegation, but his headship of the Church in this country was virtually accepted by the fact that the priests, and consequently the laity, acted during the War under the jurisdiction of the last Jesuit Superior, Father John Lewis, who was Bishop Challoner's vicar-general in the colonies. Bishop Challoner's death became known to the American clergy about the time of the victory at Yorktown (October 19, 1781), and they were too patriotic, or too prudent, to appeal to his successor in matters ecclesiastical; in fact, Bishop James Talbot not

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<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 118.



only showed no desire to continue his American jurisdiction, but even refused to give faculties to two American priests, Fathers John Boone and Henry Pile, who applied to him on their way home in 1783, declaring that he would exercise power no longer over the American Church. The only outstanding factor of these ten years of inaction is Father John Carroll's *Plan of Organization*, of 1782. On February 20, 1782, he wrote to Father Charles Plowden, whose name will now appear regularly until the end of Carroll's life, describing the listlessness which had come over the ex-Jesuits who had merely stayed at their posts, doing their work in a spiritless way, while the war waged back and forth across the land:

The clergymen here continue to live in the old form. It is the effect of habit, and if they could promise themselves immortality, it would be well enough. But I regret that indolence prevents any form of administration being adopted, which might tend to secure to posterity a succession of Catholic clergymen, and secure to these a comfortable subsistence. I said, that the former system of administration (that is, everything being in the power of a Superior) continued. But all those checks upon him so wisely provided by former constitutions, are at an end. It is happy that the present Superior [Father John Lewis] is a person free from every selfish view and ambition. But his successor may not [be]. And what is likewise to be feared, the succeeding generation, which will not be trained in the same discipline and habits as the present, will in all probability be infected much more strongly with interested and private views. The system, therefore, which they will adopt, will be less calculated for the publick or future benefit, than would be agreed to now, if they could be prevailed upon to enter at all upon the business. *But ignorance, indolence, delusion (you remember certain prophecies of re-establisment), and above all the irresolution of Mr. Lewis, put a stop to every proceeding in this matter.*<sup>2</sup>

These are the words of a man of insight and of courageous principles. At the time they were written, Father John Carroll held no official position in the body of the clergy, and was not even in touch with those who were considered their leaders. He had shown a spirit of independence from the time of his return in 1774, and very soon he began to exhibit points of dissimilarity with the majority of his fellow-priests in the mission. The hope of an early restoration of the Society of Jesus he looked upon

<sup>2</sup> HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, p. 609 (Italics ours).

as delusion, although no member of the great Order to which he belonged felt the blow which had fallen upon them more keenly than he. But his mind was too logical and his insight too far-reaching to allow him to entertain any false sentiments in a matter which, as an ex-Jesuit, touched him so intimately as the vindication of the Society's good name. Father John Carroll had outgrown the insularity of many of his fellow-labourers; and added to this calm logical outlook went an absence of characteristics which, if present in his make-up during those days of reorganization, would have seriously hampered him in the work that was to fall to his lot. Among those characteristics was freedom from emotionalism. To the sentimentality that creeps out in the clergy correspondence of the day over the fall of the Society, he was never a party. John Carroll was not a cold man. He could be affectionate, and no doubt his correspondence, if it existed today, would display a tender side to his nature. Apart from his domestic relations, he was as phlegmatic and practical as any Englishman of his time. He hated pretense and sham. He avoided pomp and show. He stood for authority, but only so long as authority lived up to its obligations. And no American living at that time caught so quickly and indelibly the spirit that had created the new Republic. His attitude was uncompromising on all points of doctrine. He was a man who loved the truth, a man of facts. Dr. Wharton fared badly at his hands because Carroll was not satisfied to accept a single quotation or reference in the chaplain's *Letter*. Every sentence was compared with the original, and with that disaster to Wharton every one who has read the *Address* is familiar. His position was a singularly unhappy one, in one way, but was also singularly felicitous in another. The indolence of his fellow-priests he did not hesitate to pillory. He knew it was an indolence caused by the suppression of their beloved Society. But he saw the danger of their listlessness. They knew better than anyone the kind and the content of any clerical organization which would be set up; and with immigration growing, it was evident that the secular clergy of Europe would follow or accompany their people; religious of other Orders than the Jesuits would come—all with their own ways and means of securing control. If American Catholicism was to have the proper start, the time was

urgent. Father Lewis had grown old and gray in the service. Nothing could be expected of him. Father Molyneux in Philadelphia for a time seemed to be more alive than the rest, and did not appear to have his mind clouded by the "delusion" of a restoration, but laziness soon overtook him. Carroll knew that the hopes of a restoration were not wholly innocent of a desire to protect the important proprietary rights the Jesuits had acquired—a problem which was to sit like Banquo's ghost at every board-meeting of the clergy for almost a half-century. Another factor John Carroll realized, and, realizing, accepted without conditions: that the old order of things had passed away forever in the new Republic. Independence was not an experiment. There was a finality about Yorktown that could not be gainsaid. The last year of the War and the years immediately following the victory of 1781 are somewhat blemished by reconcentration camps, persecutions, and exile with all its misery, in the lives of those who did not wish to share the fruits of the victory. *America for Americans* was the shibboleth even in those days; and in their own way, bombastic though it may have been, the leaders and the victors of American independence were determined beyond all compromise to secure their country from foreign interference and foreign overlordship. To have made a distinction between London and Rome at that time would be asking too much of those who were then flushed with victory. John Carroll felt this spirit and was not out of sympathy with its basic purpose. He had indeed come closely into contact with a similar spirit during his twenty-seven years in France and Belgium; and although the extreme doctrines of that clerical party in Europe which looked askance at the centralized authority of the Holy See never found a place in his written word, nevertheless we must admit that it is this spirit which will direct him in much that he does from the time he is appointed prefect-apostolic until his mantle as archbishop falls upon Leonard Neale's shoulders in 1815.

His *Plan of Organization* (1782), while treating mainly of the problem of property, shows how unmistakably his mind was directed by the spirit of honesty and open diplomacy. He places upon the clergy of the two States of Maryland and Pennsylvania, where the bulk of the Jesuit estates was, the obligation arising

from justice and from charity, of using the funds entrusted to their predecessors and to themselves, solely for the spiritual uplift of the faithful, and for the sustenance of the clergy. A due and equitable administration of the estates could be secured only by the adoption of some form of administration, settled upon by joint concurrence of all, and founded upon principles of justice and equality. A sensible arrangement of checks and balances was to be agreed upon among themselves, for the danger was present that, without any such check on the administrators, the estates might be squandered. Whatever administration be adopted, it was of the utmost consequence that it should be settled by common consent. He would have the clergy of the different districts meet and elect a deputy for this general meeting. All this was necessary to protect the estates from unworthy administrators, from any bishop who might be appointed over them, and even, if necessary, from undue interference on the part of the representatives of the Holy See. Carroll refers to the system of checks and balances adopted by the ex-Jesuits in England, and ends his *Plan* with these words: "They have rightly distinguished between the spiritual power derived from the Bishop, and which must be left in the hands to which he has intrusted it; and the common rights of the missionaries to their temporal possessions, to which, as the Bishop, or Pope himself, have no just claim, so neither can they invest any person or persons with the administration of them."<sup>3</sup>

Hughes says that presumably a copy of the *Plan* was communicated to his clerical brethren, since, in the following year,

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 614. The entire document with Carroll's marginal corrections will be found in HUGHES (*l.c.*). That Carroll was not unduly emphasizing the possibility of encroachments upon the property rights of the clergy will be granted by all who are aware of the unjust, and, at times, the cruel confiscation of Jesuit property in Europe. "Your information of the intention of Propaganda," he writes to Plowden (September 26, 1783), "gives me concern no farther, than to hear that men, whose institution was for the service of Religion, should bend their thoughts so much more to the grasping of power and the commanding of wealth. For they may be assured that they will never get possession of a six pence of our property here; and, if any of our friends could be weak enough to deliver any real estate into their hands or attempt to subject it to their authority, our civil government would be called upon to wrest it again out of their dominion. A foreign temporal jurisdiction will never be tolerated here; and even the spiritual supremacy of the Pope is the only reason, why in some of the United States the full participation of all civil rights are not granted to the Roman Catholics. They may therefore send their agents when they please; they will certainly return empty-handed. . . ." Cf. HUGHES, *l. c.*, pp. 617-628.



all the main lines traced by Carroll were followed in the proceedings of the Chapter of 1783. Carroll's correspondence with Plowden gives us additional light on his *Plan*. On September 26, 1783, he tells his former colleague: "Our gentlemen here continue, as when I last wrote. We are endeavoring to establish some regulations tending to perpetuate a succession of labourers in this vineyard, to preserve their morals, to prevent idleness, and to secure an equitable and frugal administration of temporals. *An immense field is opened to the zeal of apostolical men. Universal toleration throughout this immense country, and innumerable R. Catholics going and ready to go into the new regions bordering on the Mississippi; perhaps the finest in the world, and impatiently clamorous for clergymen to attend them.*"<sup>4</sup> The leader is again apparent in this letter for he says that "the object nearest my heart is *to establish a college* on this continent for the education of youth, which might at the same time be a seminary for future clergymen. *But at present I see no prospect of success.*"<sup>5</sup>

Church administration, therefore, during the period of the war was for all practical purposes non-existent. The only change in the clerical situation was made by the Angel of Death. They could not accept any longer, without causing prejudice, the jurisdiction of the London Vicar-Apostolic, even had that patriotic Englishman, Bishop Talbot, the brother of the Earl of Shrewsbury, discovered in his heart any love or respect for the rebels in the former colonies.

The Holy See was rather far away in those days, and they had no intermediary whom they could trust. Their confidence in Rome had received a body-blow but ten years before, and they had no special reason to encourage the establishment of a "foreign power," such as the Congregation of Propaganda Fide was considered, over the American Church. Something, however, had to be done. The little band of priests showed where the merciless hand of death had robbed them, here and there, of a brother and fellow-labourer. The vast country was alive with possibilities, material and spiritual. Immigration was like a sluiceway, raised an inch or so, but with a strong hand ready to send

<sup>4</sup> HUGHES, *l.c.*, p. 615 (Italics ours).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*



a gulf stream of humanity across the Atlantic, seeking liberty, peace, and happiness. Whether Carroll's *Plan of Organization* alone aroused the sleeping shepherds is not certain, but by the summer of 1783, we find the clergy gathered at last for the purpose of organization.

On June 27, 1783, in consequence of a call sent out by Father Lewis, who still continued to act as Vicar-General of the London District, six deputies of the American clergy met at the old Jesuit residence at Whitemarsh, half-way between Georgetown and Annapolis, in a First General Chapter, to consider the grave question of providing a Constitution for the American Church. At this meeting they exchanged views on the ways and means of securing the same. The mission was divided into three Districts—the Northern, Middle, and Southern—in each of which the clergy were to meet and to appoint two delegates for a General Chapter.<sup>6</sup> At these local meetings, a *Form of Government* was proposed, and on November 6, 1783, the delegates met again at Whitemarsh to decide according to their instructions what was to be accepted. At this meeting there were present: Father John Lewis, the Superior, who also represented the Northern District; Fathers John Carroll and Bernard Diderick from the Middle District; and Fathers Ignatius Matthews and James Walton from the Southern District. Carroll's *Plan* was fully discussed, but its ultimate adoption was postponed until the final meeting of this First Chapter, held on October 11, 1784. The two principal questions deliberated upon by this Chapter were: the maintenance of ecclesiastical life and discipline, and the preservation of ecclesiastical property. Three separate sections were decided upon as forming the Constitution of the clergy—*The Form of Government*, in nineteen articles; *the Rules for the Particular Government of Members belonging to the Body of the Clergy*, in six articles; and *the Regulations respecting the Management of Plantations*, in eight articles.<sup>7</sup>

A Formula of Promise was added, which each member of the Select Body of the Clergy was to sign. The Chapter then ad-

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<sup>6</sup> SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 205.

<sup>7</sup> Original copies of these documents with the signatures of those present are in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Special C-El. Hughes has published only a few of these important papers; cf. HUGHES, *l. c.*, pp. 617-628.

journeyed to meet in three years (October 10, 1787), and all the deputies signed the minutes. The clergy were henceforth known as the Select Body of the Clergy; their deputies were called Representatives to the Chapter; and the Board of Trustees, formed to exercise administrative function, was called the Corporation. The Constitution adopted in 1784 remained the Rule of the clergy until 1806, when the Society of Jesus was partially restored in the United States. All the problems that dealt with this Chapter Meeting have an important bearing on the history of the Church in the earlier half of the nineteenth century; but among these problems the one which interests us most and which very soon begins to centre itself around Father John Carroll, is the question of the superiority over the Church in the Republic.

Two events of the Chapter need to be recorded. The first was the appointment (November, 1783) of a Committee of Five to draw up a Petition to the Holy See, asking that Father John Lewis be formally constituted the Superior of the Church in the United States, with certain episcopal privileges—those of administering the Sacrament of Confirmation, blessing chalices and altar stones, and giving faculties to new-comers in the mission. This Petition, composed by Fathers Lewis, Diderick, Matthews, Walton, and John Carroll, gives us a clearer idea of the attitude of the clergy towards the problem of a hierarchy of jurisdiction in the American Church:

*Most Holy Father:*

We, John Lewis, Bernard Diderick, Ignatius Matthews, James Walton and John Carroll, missionary priests, residing in the Thirteen United States of North America, assembled together from the neighboring stations to take counsel for the good of the missions, our fellow-priests residing in the more remote parts of this mission agreeing herein and approving by letter, in our name and in the common name of our brethren, with all respect represent to your Holiness, that we, placed under the recent supreme dominion of the United States, can no longer have recourse, as formerly, for necessary spiritual jurisdiction to the Bishops and Vicars-Apostolic residing in different and foreign States (for this has very frequently been intimated to us in very positive terms by the rulers of this Republic), nor recognize any one of them as our ecclesiastical Superior, without open offense of this supreme civil magistracy and political government. Wherefore we, placed in this difficult position, have recourse to your Holiness, humbly beseeching you to vouchsafe to confirm anew the ecclesiastical Superior whom we now have, namely, John

Lewis, a priest already approved and confirmed by the Vicar-Apostolic of London, to whom this whole mission was subject before the change of political government, and to delegate to him the power of granting the necessary faculties to priests coming into these missions, as it shall seem expedient; that said Superior may delegate this power to at least one or more of the most suitable missionaries as the necessity and distance of time and place may require.

Moreover, as there is no bishop in these regions who can bless the holy oils, of which we were deprived for several years during the confusion of the war, no one to bless the chalices and altar stones needed, no one to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation, we humbly beseech your Holiness to empower the said John Lewis, priest, Superior, to perform these things in the present necessity, and until otherwise provided for this mission by your Holiness, that our faithful, living in many dangers, may be no longer deprived of the Sacrament of Confirmation nor die without Extreme Unction according to the rite of the Church.

Moreover, we also pray your Holiness to bestow on this mission the indulgences of the Jubilee, and to extend to the missionaries the ample faculties which may seem seasonable in these vast and remote regions racked by a long bitter war, where on account of the constant military movements, neither the Jubilee on the exaltation of your Holiness to the See of Peter, nor the Jubilee of the year 1775, could be promulgated, much less celebrated or enjoyed.

This, Most Holy Father, is what the aforesaid petitioners, missionary priests in these regions of United North America, humbly solicit from your Holiness' supreme wisdom and providence for the good of the Catholic Religion.<sup>8</sup>

Shea says that this Petition, which is not dated in the original, was forwarded through Cardinal Borromeo. Evidently it was presented to Pius VI, as it is still among the *Propaganda Archives*.<sup>9</sup> When its contents became known to the rest of the American clergy, it was feared by some that it was not sufficiently respectful in tone, and accordingly another Committee, of which John Carroll was a member, was appointed to draft a second Petition. This second request for a Superior contained the modification that they be permitted to elect their own Superior; it declared also that the United States Government would not permit the presence of a bishop in the country. Father Carroll was instructed to send this second Petition to the Holy

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<sup>8</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scrittura riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, ff. 238. (Translation from SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 209-211.)

<sup>9</sup> *Propaganda Archives, l. c., America Centrale*, vol. ii, no. 8. (Another copy.)

Father through a friend at Rome. Accompanying the Petition was a letter from Carroll instructing his friend on the mind of the American clergy toward the establishment of a hierarchy in the United States.

You are not ignorant that in these United States our religious system has undergone a revolution, if possible, more extraordinary than our political one. In all of them free toleration is allowed to Christians of every denomination; and particularly in the States of Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, a communication of all civil rights, without distinction or diminution, is extended to those of our religion. This is a blessing and advantage which it is our duty to preserve and improve, with the utmost prudence, by demeaning ourselves on all occasions as subjects zealously attached to our government and avoiding to give any jealousies on account of any dependence on foreign jurisdictions more than that which is essential to our religion, an acknowledgment of the Pope's spiritual supremacy over the whole Christian world. You know that we of the clergy have heretofore resorted to the Vicar-Apostolic of the London District for the exercise of spiritual powers, but being well acquainted with the temper of Congress, of our assemblies and the people at large, we are firmly of opinion that we shall not be suffered to continue under such a jurisdiction whenever it becomes known to the publick. You may be assured of this from the following fact. The clergy of the Church of England were heretofore subject to the Bishop of London, but the umbrage taken at this dependence was so great, that notwithstanding the power and prevalence of that sect they could find no other method to allay jealousies, than by withdrawing themselves as they have lately done, from all obedience to him.

Being therefore thus circumstanced, we think it not only adviseable in us, but in a manner obligatory, to solicit the Holy See to place the episcopal powers, at least such as are most essential, in the hands of one amongst us, whose virtue, knowledge, and integrity of faith, shall be certified by ourselves. We shall annex to this letter such powers as we judge it absolutely necessary he should be invested with. We might add many very cogent reasons for having amongst us, a person thus empowered, and for want of whom it is impossible to conceive the inconvenience happening every day. If it be possible to obtain a grant from Rome for vesting these powers in our Superior *pro tempore*, it would be most desirable. We shall endeavor to have you aided in this application, by a recommendation, if possible, from our own country and the minister of France. You will know how to avail yourself of so favorable a Russian minister at Rome; and if Mr. Thorpe will be pleased to undertake the management of the business there, we will with cheerfulness and gratitude answer all expenses which he may incur in the prosecution of it. He will be the judge, how and whether the annexed petition ought in prudence to be presented to His Holiness, but at all events the powers



therein contained, are those which we wish our Superior to be invested with.<sup>10</sup>

Father Carroll's views on the question of establishing the American hierarchy were always guided by this distinction. He could see no other way of meeting fairly and honestly the American attitude toward "foreign jurisdiction," except by the appointment of a Bishop Ordinary with his see in the United States. He instructs his correspondent, therefore, that the Superior asked for in the Petition should have episcopal powers.

The second event was the formal presentation by Father John Carroll at the last meeting (October 11, 1784) of the Chapter of Father Thorpe's letter from Rome, dated June 9, 1784, which reached Rock Creek on August 20, 1784, announcing to Carroll the fact that the Holy See had chosen him as prefect-apostolic of the Church here, and that as soon as the necessary information on the state of the Church reached Propaganda, the Holy See would promote him to the dignity and character of a bishop. Father Thorpe's letter was discussed by the Chapter at the last meeting of the delegates, October 11, 1784, with the following result:

The business of Mr. Thorpe's letter was next considered by the Chapter and the following resolves passed. It is the opinion of the majority of the Chapter, that a Superior *in spiritualibus* with powers to give confirmation, grant faculties, dispensations, bless oils, etc., is adequate to the present exigencies of religion in this country. Resolved therefore: 1. That a Bishop is at present unnecessary. 2. That, if one be sent, it is decided by the majority of the Chapter, that he shall not be entitled to any support from the present estates of the Clergy. 3. That a committee of three be appointed to prepare and give an answer to Rome, conformable to the above resolution. The committee chosen to meet at the White-Marsh are Messrs. Bernard Diderick, Ignatius Matthews, and Joseph Mosley.<sup>11</sup>

Father Carroll had also received the news of his appointment as prefect-apostolic and of the future bishopric, on September 18, 1784, from Father Charles Plowden's letter of July 3, 1784. Plowden's letter is a frank avowal of the French intrigue, which forms the subject of the next chapter, and it is clearly the prevail-

<sup>10</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Special C-A4 (in Carroll's hand); cf. SHEA, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

<sup>11</sup> HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, p. 633.



ing English attitude on the Church which the Revolution had removed from English jurisdiction:

It appears, however, to me, a great incongruity that a negotiation should be carried on between the American States and the Court of Rome upon affairs of the Catholic Religion without the participation of the priests who are actually in the country. If Dr. Franklin reflects, he must see the impropriety of such an act and be sensible that your civil and ecclesiastical rights may be much prejudiced by it. It is not improbable that the ultimate answer of the States and of Franklin will be that your country is open to the Roman Catholic as well as to other religions, leaving the manner of establishing it to the Pope, that is, to the Propaganda. This is just the answer lately given by the King of Sweden during his residence at Rome. In consequence of it a Vicar-Apostolic is named to go to Stockholm, and a sum of money is given to build a Catholic Church. Now, as Franklin may be presumed to be less informed than we could wish upon these matters, I have desired Messrs. Sewall, Hoskins, and Mattingly to write to him with a view of giving him information, and as you are personally acquainted with him, I trust you will zealously do the same. A confidential representation will come with better grace from American Catholic clergymen than from British-born priests . . . I have suggested to them to entreat Franklin not to concur in any proposal which may be detrimental to the tranquillity and prosperity [of your Church] . . . I have had the consolation to receive information that on the 9th of last month the Propaganda had sent off ample faculties, according to the tenor of the petition, with power to give the Sacrament of Confirmation to you, and that you are to be appointed Bishop and Vicar-Apostolic as soon as proper information can be procured from America. I heartily congratulate with religion, you and your country. Mr. Thorpe and the Cardinal judged that the Memorial which came to Rome in the name of Messrs. John Lewis and his associates could not be presented in its own full shape; it demanded too much, it demanded it in a manner too immethodical, and it would have given occasion to too many comments which at such a distance from information could not well be answered. You cannot be ignorant that prudence was highly requisite as well to obtain your request as to remove every occasion to the gentlemen of Propaganda introducing their own pretensions . . . They must have some motive for delegating you with plenitude of power while the negotiation between Doria and Franklin is yet undetermined. Perhaps they feared that it might result in the establishing a Bishop in Ordinary which would at once withdraw the American Missions from their control. Our friends at Rome have taken much pains to inculcate the danger of introducing any alien or foreigners with spiritual powers into your Missions, and, it seems, with some success.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 633.

Father Carroll replied the day he received this letter (September 15, 1784): "Nothing can place in a stronger light the aversion to the remains of the Society than the observation made by you of a negotiation being carried on relative to the affairs of religion with Dr. Franklin, without ever deigning to apply for information to the Catholic clergy of this country." When John Carroll first heard that the Paris Nuncio, Doria Pamphili, was consulting his friend, Franklin, on the question of episcopal government in the United States, he was on the point of writing at once to the American envoy, but he feared that such a procedure would place him in "a conspicuous point of view." No one realized more keenly than Carroll the necessity of spiritual independence from every foreign court, the Holy See alone excepted; and the French intrigue, while it accidentally hastened his own appointment, became very distasteful to him. "I do assure you, dear Charles," he wrote, "that nothing personal to myself, excepting the dissolution of the Society, ever gave me so much concern [as the news in your letter]. And, if a meeting of our gentlemen held the ninth of October agree in thinking that I can decline the intended office without grievous inconvenience, I shall certainly do so."

Meanwhile, the Committee of Three, appointed in the meeting of October 11, 1784, set to work on the proposed *Memorial* to Rome against the appointment of a Bishop. On December 9, 1784, Father Diderick, who led the opposition to the introduction of episcopal government in the United States, sent Father Carroll a copy of the *Memorial*, with the following letter:

*Port Tobacco, December 9, 1784.*

Rev. Sir: We send you a copy of the letter we have drawn up to send to Rome. We hope it will not be disagreeable to you, as your intended promotion seemed to give you much uneasiness. We should be happy, in case of a bishop's being appointed here, that you should be the person, as we have not any objection to your person and qualities. But as we look upon it to be unnecessary and hurtful to the good of religion, we have sent this letter according to what was determined in chapter.

We are, with due respect, Rev. Sir,

*Your most obed't and humble servants,*

BERNARD DIDERICK,

IGNATIUS MATTHEWS.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> CAMPBELL, in the *United States Catholic Magazine*, vol. iii, p. 797.

The *Memorial* was as follows:

*Most Holy Father:*

Of the twenty-two secular priests living in the thirteen United States of North America, six were appointed a few months ago to deliberate together upon the welfare of the Catholics in this part of the world. Having assembled for this purpose, they expressed the opinion that there is not the least necessity for a bishop in this country, because there is no institution as yet for the education of youth, and their subsequent preparation for holy orders. I, Bernard Diderick, have been requested by the committee to notify your holiness of this sentiment, and to acquaint you also with the following circumstances:

1. The majority of the Protestant population here are averse to a Roman Catholic prelate, and for this reason the episcopal office if introduced would most likely awaken their jealousy against us.

2. We are not able to support a bishop in a manner becoming his station, and at the same time to supply the necessary wants of our fellow laborers in the ministry; moreover, the Catholics cannot be induced to aid us with their means in effecting this object.

3. Were it even admitted that the two points just mentioned would present no difficulty, we are entirely at a loss to see how the greater number of missionaries, whose coöperation would be so very desirable in this immense region, could be furnished with the means of passing to this country.

We therefore humbly entreat Your Holiness not to persist in the design of conferring the episcopal dignity upon any individual in these parts, unless the necessary provision be made in some other quarter for his support. Should Your Holiness entertain a different view, it would be a source of much affliction to us, while at the same time we are convinced that it will be much more detrimental than otherwise to the interest of religion; for as it has pleased Your Holiness to appoint one of our body to administer confirmation, consecrate altar-stones, bless the holy oils, and grant dispensations in the prohibited degrees, this appointment is equally advantageous for the good of religion.<sup>14</sup>

Carroll's sentiments on the *Memorial* are expressed in a letter to Father Thorpe, dated Maryland, near Georgetown, February 17, 1785, which follows in its chronological place in the series of documents given in the next chapter. "At the same meeting," he says, "but after I had left it thro' indisposition, a direction was given to Messrs. Diderick, Mosely and Matthews to write you a letter (I believe likewise a *Memorial* to the Pope) against the

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 797-798. The contemporary copies of these documents are in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Special C-A3, but they are so badly worn with age that I could not compare them with Hughes.

appointment of a bishop. I hear that this displeased many of those absent from the meeting, and that it is not certain whether the measure is to be carried into execution. Mr. Diderick has shown me a copy of his intended letter to you, of his *Memorial*, and of a letter to Cardl. Borromeo. He has no other introduction to write to this worthy Cardinal than the information communicated to me by our common friend Plowden, of his great worth and friendly disposition to you. I made objections to some parts of his letters; and I cannot tell, as I mentioned before, whether they will be sent. It is matter of surprise to me that he was nominated to the Commission of Three; he is truly a zealous, painstaking Clergyman; but not sufficiently prudent, and conversant in the world, or capable of conducting such a business with the circumspection necessary to be used by us towards our own Government, and the Cong. of the Propaganda."<sup>15</sup>

The First Chapter Meeting was scarcely over when Father Carroll received a third notification of his appointment in a letter from the French Chargé d'affaires. Barbé de Marbois, dated New York, October 27, 1784; and finally on November 26, 1789, he received the official documents from Rome, sent (June 9, 1784) by Cardinal Antonelli, the Prefect of Propaganda. The Chapter *Petition* in favor of Father Lewis and the Diderick *Memorial* did not arrive in time to prevent Father Carroll's appointment, but they had the desired effect of delaying the appointment of a bishop for the United States until 1789. Another factor, quite foreign to the best interests of the American Church, had intervened in the meantime, and this factor it was which actually hastened Carroll's appointment as prefect-apostolic. This was an intrigue at Paris for what Shea calls "the enslavement of the Catholics in this country."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> GUILDAY, *Appointment of Father John Carroll, etc.*, in the *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. vi, p. 237. The letter is in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9A-F1.

<sup>16</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 213 note.

## CHAPTER XIII

### FRENCH ECCLESIASTICAL INTERFERENCE IN THE AMERICAN CHURCH

(1783-1784)

At the very time when the American clergy were holding their meetings at Whitemarsh for the purpose of reorganizing the government of the Church under one of themselves, who would be subject in spiritual affairs to the Holy See only, and thus be free, as the Republic was, from all foreign alliances, an interesting and significant series of negotiations was being promoted in Europe, and especially at Paris, the object of which was to place the nascent American Church under French control. France had proven herself America's noblest and most generous friend during the Revolution. In December, 1776, an American mission at Paris, presided over by Benjamin Franklin, had formally asked the assistance of the French Government in the great struggle for independence. That the policy of France was to take advantage of England's conflict with the American colonies was understood by all at that time. France was still smarting under the defeat she sustained in the Seven Years' War and she was recognized as the chief sufferer among the continental nations which had been humiliated by England. America's independence would be a great check upon the arrogance of the British Navy. The Secretary of Foreign Affairs in France at that time, the Count de Vergennes, was not only in favour of immediate intervention in behalf of the rebelling colonists, but was also a warm personal friend of Franklin.<sup>1</sup> Burgoyne's surrender, or, as it was called, to spare the English general's feelings, the "convention between Lieutenant-General Burgoyne and Major-General Gates," on October 17, 1777, marked the turning point in the war.<sup>2</sup> From that date down to

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<sup>1</sup> FISHER, *Struggle for American Independence*, vol. ii, pp. 113-115.

<sup>2</sup> General Sir John Burgoyne was one of the most tolerant men in the British



the victory at Yorktown the Revolution became an international affair. The news reached Paris in December, 1777, and its immediate effect was to hasten the Alliance with France. This was signed on January 17, 1778. Soldiers, money, warships, and supplies were to be furnished to the struggling colonists. Ultimate victory for the Americans was now a certainty. Franklin, in his house at Passy, a suburb of Paris, gathered around him the best men of the French capital, and it was through his shrewdness and statesmanship that the Alliance was kept in vigorous activity until the end of the war. It must be remembered that France was a great Catholic country at this time.<sup>3</sup> The King, Louis XVI, mediocre as he was in statesmanship, was a most Christian King in more than name, and there is no doubt that every aspect of the future of the new nation then coming into existence was discussed between him and his ministers. The French Alliance, as is well-known, was denounced by the Loyalists in America as "a horror and an infamy worse than the Declaration of Independence." That Protestant colonists should ally themselves with the great Roman Catholic monarchy, the ancient enemy of the Anglo-Saxon race, and ally themselves for the purpose of making war upon their own faithful and loving mother, England, was a depth of degradation to which, they declared, they had thought it impossible for Americans to descend. "They saw in it nothing but ruin, and the Romanizing of America under despotic government."<sup>4</sup>

It is hard to enter upon the story of the effort made in France at this time (1783-1784) to give an organized hierarchy to the Church in the new Republic, without considerable suspicion of all concerned. The leading fact to be kept in mind, however, for a cautious judgment on the whole episode, is Franklin's prompt acquiescence in the appointment of John Carroll once the latter's name was seriously considered. The whole matter can be easily

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service. His speech in the House of Commons, on December 11, 1770, in favor of freedom of worship and the abrogation of the test oath for Catholic soldiers was the beginning of the debate which led up to the relief which came to the Catholics in England in 1778.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *The French Clergy's Gift to America*, in the *Catholic Mind*, vol. xviii, no. 8.

<sup>4</sup> FISHER, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 120; cf. VAN TYNE, *Loyalists in America*, pp. 132-136, for an excellent summary of the loyalist point of view; KITE, *Notes on Franco-American Relations in 1778*, in the *Records*, vol. xxxii, pp. 131-150.

followed in the diplomatic and ecclesiastical correspondence of the time.<sup>5</sup>

In the *Instruction*<sup>6</sup> sent by the Congregation of Propaganda Fide to Prince Doria Pamphili, Archbishop of Seleucia, and Apostolic Nuncio at Paris, dated January 15, 1783, the Nuncio is reminded that the occasion of the general peace which was to be concluded among the nations of Europe was an important one for the future of the Church in the new Republic across the seas. He is informed that up to the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, all the possessions of England on the continent or on the islands of America were under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Vicar-Apostolic of London. "The approaching declaration of the independence of all those provinces," he is informed, "will destroy the bonds of their political and civil subordination to the British government; it will thereby destroy all bonds in religious matters, and, therefore, the Vicar-Apostolic of London will be deprived of the influence and direction he has exercised until now in the religious affairs of those provinces."<sup>7</sup> The Nuncio should, therefore, exert his own power with the Court of France, to the end that, through the influence which the King has with the leaders of the American Congress, he may obtain the insertion of an article in the Treaty of Peace "concerning the free exercise and the maintenance of the Catholic religion." His Most Christian Majesty, Louis XVI, was to be approached on the question of assuming the royal patronage of the Church in the new Republic. A plan for establishing new missions and for sending missionaries to the new Republic was to be discussed, if the opportunity offered itself. A most desirable method of organizing the Church in the United States "would be to establish in one of the principal cities a Vicar-Apostolic, with episcopal character, chosen from among the subjects of the new Republic, who should

<sup>5</sup> These *Documents* (on the appointment of the first Bishop of Baltimore) appeared in the original French, Italian, and Latin in the *American Historical Review* for July, 1910, pp. 801-829. They were copied at Rome by Professor Carl Russell Fish, while he was engaged on his *Guide to the Materials for American History in Roman and other Italian Archives* (Washington, 1911), and were translated into English and published by the late American Church historian, Rev. Edward I. Devitt, S.J., in the *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, vol. xxi, pp. 185-236, and were later printed separately. They are cited here as *Fish-Devitt Transcripts*.

<sup>6</sup> For the diplomatic and historical value of these Instructions, cf. CAUCHIE-MAERE, *Recueil des Instructions Générales aux Nonces de Flandre*, pp. 3-9. Brussels, 1914.

<sup>7</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Istruzioni*, vol. i, ff. 41-44; *Fish-Devitt Transcripts*, p. 4.

receive from the Holy See powers for the spiritual government of the Catholics of all those regions, and who, thereafter, should receive the charge of establishing various missionary stations, more or less numerous, according to the requirements of each province.”<sup>8</sup> A bishop vicar-apostolic was proposed by the Holy See, not only because he would be able to guide the Church and confer on the Catholics all they needed to render their spiritual life complete, but also because “national jealousy could thus be obviated, by not constraining these new republicans to receive those sacraments [Confirmation and Holy Orders] from foreign bishops.”<sup>9</sup> The Holy See recognized that the members of the American Congress might not be willing to allow a Catholic bishop to enter the United States; if such should prove to be the case, a native American might be appointed prefect, with the title of vicar-apostolic, enjoying episcopal power, except for the administration of Holy Orders. The rule is laid down in this *Instruction* to the Nuncio that if, by any chance, a native American be found worthy for this important post, he should be preferred, whether for the simple prefecture or for the vicariate-apostolic. If an available American should not be found, then Congress should be asked to allow a foreigner to be appointed. It would appear also from the text of the *Instruction* that Congress was to be given the privilege of stating whether the choice was acceptable or not. The maintenance of the new ecclesiastical head in the United States should also be discussed, and in case no help be proffered, the Congregation of Propaganda Fide would be ready to assign an allowance to the new bishop, to the prefect, or the vicar-apostolic. The Holy See no doubt hoped that if the missionaries who would go to America were Frenchmen, the King would assist them “from his royal and liberal munificence.”

Less than a month later, on February 10, 1783, Doria Pamphili replied to Cardinal Antonelli that he had transmitted His Eminence's wishes to the Prime Minister, Count de Vergennes,<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *Prop. Arch., ibid., Fish-Devitt Transcripts*, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Charles Gravier Vergennes, Prime Minister of France, born at Dijon in 1717, died at Paris, 1787. Entered the diplomatic service under Chavigny, French ambassador at Lisbon. Appointed in 1750, Minister to Elector at Trèves. Six years later, became ambassador at Constantinople. Recalled in 1768, was later (1771) appointed

at a conference held on Tuesday of the preceding week. Article VIII of the peace preliminaries (signed on November 30, 1782) between England and America, had secured religious peace to the new Republic. The Prime Minister saw no difficulty in establishing a vicariate-apostolic in America, with an American having episcopal power, and the Nuncio begged him to inform Mr. Franklin, the minister plenipotentiary of the new Republic, that he desired to treat with him on this important matter. The main object of France in the war was American Independence, and while John Jay and John Adams, two of the American commissioners, were very suspicious of the intentions of France, Franklin never lost his complete confidence in our ally. France had been forced to give up so much for the hard-won independence of the new Republic that it is not surprising to find Franklin willing, probably anxious, partially to recompense France by allowing the French Government to have control over the Church in the United States.<sup>11</sup>

Cardinal Antonelli replied on March 19, 1783, telling the Nuncio what a great consolation his letter of February 10 had been to all in Rome. He is especially cheered by the hope that Catholic missionaries will be tolerated in the United States and that a native vicar-apostolic will be permitted to reside in the new Republic.<sup>12</sup> Six months were to pass before the Nuncio was able to report on the results of his promised interview with

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to Stockholm. Louis XVI gave him the post of Secretary of Foreign Affairs, and it was in this capacity that he concluded the Franco-American alliance on January 26, 1778. Had he lived, it has been said, he might have prevented the French Revolution.

<sup>11</sup> *Prop. Arch., Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 186; *Fish-Devitt Transcripts*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>12</sup> Two interesting documents find a place here in order of time, though they have little bearing on the question under discussion. The first is a letter from the Capuchin, Father Sulpitius de Fribourg, dated Isle of San Domingo, June 25, 1783, to Propaganda, calling attention to the sad state of the Catholics in the Carolinas, and announcing his willingness to go to the faithful there, if the Holy See would give him proper authority. He explains that he is well versed in French and German and could easily perfect himself in English. Propaganda replied on September 27, 1783, praising his great zeal, but postponed accepting his worthy offer until some sort of ecclesiastical government be set up in the new Republic. Father Sulpitius wrote also on July 8, 1783, laying his desire before Cardinal Antonelli, and on March 13, 1784, a similar answer, if not in the identical terms to that of September 27, was sent to the good friar. This is a good example of the anxiety expressed by Carroll in his letters to Plowden in 1782, that apostolic men, seeing the state of the clergy in the newly created States, would succeed in having themselves sent to save the souls of the faithful. (*Propaganda Archives, Scritture originale, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 195.) A further example of this self-aroused interest in the American Church can



Mr. Franklin. On September 1, 1783, two days before the definitive treaty of peace was signed, Doria Pamphili wrote to the Cardinal, telling him that he was transmitting a *dossier* of three papers, marked A, B, and C, respectively, relating to the organization of the Church in the United States and giving to the prefect a complete account of the negotiations entered into up to that date:

I have the honor of transmitting to your Eminence, herewith, three papers marked A, B, and C, respectively, and relating to the establishment of apostolic missions in the new republic of the United States of America, which matter was committed to me. The first is a copy of a note or memorandum, that I sent to Mr. Franklin, minister plenipotentiary of the new republic, the second and third are copies of a note of Mr. Franklin and of some observations made by him on the subject of my note just mentioned. In order to take time to send a categorical reply to Mr. Franklin, I merely acknowledged the receipt of these papers, in which your Eminence will find Mr. Franklin to be of opinion that our court, or, in other words, the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda, will be free to take all measures that may be useful to the Catholics of America without infringing the constitutions, and that the congress will not fail tacitly to approve the choice that the Sacred Congregation may make in concert with the minister plenipotentiary of the United States of a French ecclesiastic, who, residing, in France, may regulate the affairs of Catholics in America, through a suffragan there. In this connection, I am of the opinion that, rather than a French ecclesiastic, the apostolic nuncio for the time being in France, in concert with that Sacred Congregation, might, himself, invest an ecclesiastic with the character of bishop, of prefect, or of vicar-apostolic for the government

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be seen in the following letter (*Propaganda Archives, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 263), from John O'Connolly, dated at Paris, May 23, 1784:

*Monseigneur,*

Quoique mes Supérieurs m'aient destiné pour les missions de Irlande, dont je suis natif, j'ose cependant représenter à Votre Eminence, que l'état déplorable de la foi catholique en Amérique me pénètre, de la plus vive douleur; d'autant plus que la tolérance accordée dans ce pays, à toute sorte de sectes, y donnera entrée à toutes celles qui se donnent pour protestantes, et y feront des prosélytes nombreux; s'il n'y a point de prêtre touché de zèle des âmes pour en empêcher le progrès funeste; et pour gagner à la vraie foi ceux que les faux apôtres chercheront à corrompre, sous prétexte de réforme. C'est dans ces sentiments et dans le désir d'encourager à la persévérance les vrais fideles de ces contrées que je supplie Votre Eminence de me faire expédier des patentes pour la mission de l'Amérique septentrionale; *ubi messis multa, operarii autem pauci, vel nulli*. Pour ce qui regarde mes mœurs, Votre Eminence en sera instruite par le Père Gardien de St. Isidore à Rome. J'ose espérer que Votre Eminence daignera m'accorder cette grâce et m'honorer d'une réponse.



in question. There being in America, as Mr. Franklin says in his note C, no college or establishment in which a Catholic ecclesiastic may receive the instruction that it is necessary for him to have, nor the hope of a public appropriation for such a purpose, Your Eminence will recognize that recourse must be had to other means in this connection, and that those suggested by Mr. Franklin in his note C, concerning the four establishments of English Religious that exist in France, could not, and should not, be proposed, much less, accepted. The last paragraph of that note deserves all attention, tending as it does, to the attainment of desirable ends. I have thought it well to give information of the contents of these papers to the Count of Vergennes, a true statesman, full of zeal and attachment for our holy Catholic religion; and as I begged of him to facilitate the means of establishing a college in France for the education of as many priests as may be necessary for the spiritual welfare of the Roman Catholics who now are, or may come to be, in the States of the new republic, the royal minister, assuring me that he will give all the assistance that it may be in his power to lend in that connection, suggested that I speak to Monseigneur the Bishop of Autun, minister of ecclesiastical benefices of this realm, in order that he, by his lights, and by his good offices, may assist in the establishment of the proposed college, at St. Malo, Nantes, L'Orient, or any other city of France, near the coast, it being necessary, however, first to obtain the requisite funds, and to know, approximately, the number of priests that the Roman Catholics of the United States may need, and whether there be in that country, individuals inclined to undertake the studies and to adopt the ecclesiastical state. Accordingly, I had an interview with Monseigneur the Bishop of Autun, on Wednesday, and we agreed to confer together, on Saturday of last week, with the Count of Vergennes. To this end, on the day appointed, I went to Versailles, and the Count of Vergennes, as well as the above-named prelate, showed himself to be desirous of obtaining the funds necessary for so important an end. While this matter is being thought over, I trust that your Eminence will give me what information you have in regard to the mission of North America, and will obtain further information from the prelate who is in charge of that mission, requesting him to give the number of priests that are in those states, and the number of them that may be needed there. In quest of this information, after receiving the answer of Your Eminence, I will endeavor to obtain that the Count of Vergennes write to the Chevalier de la Luzerne, who has been minister plenipotentiary of the Most Christian King to the United States of North America for the last three years, and who is much esteemed and loved there.<sup>13</sup>

The first note (Note A) is a copy of a memorandum which the Nuncio had sent to Mr. Franklin on July 28, 1783, requesting him

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<sup>13</sup> *Prop. Arch., Scritt. riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, ff. 206-213; *Fish-Devitt Transcripts*, pp. 8-11.

to transmit the same to the American Congress and to support it with his influence:

Before the revolution that has just been consummated in North America, the Catholics and the missionaries of those provinces were in spiritual dependence upon the Vicar-Apostolic residing at London. It is obvious that this arrangement can not be continued; but, as it is essential that the Catholic subjects of the United States have an ecclesiastic to govern them in what concerns their religion, the Congregation of Propaganda Fide, which exists at Rome with a view to the establishment and preservation of the missions, has determined to propose to the Congress the installation of one of their Catholic subjects, in some city of the United States of North America, with the powers of Vicar-Apostolic and with the character of Bishop, or simply as Prefect-Apostolic. The establishment of a Bishop Vicar-Apostolic seems to be preferable, all the more, since this would enable the Catholic subjects of the United States to receive Confirmation and Holy Orders in their own country, instead of being obliged to go to foreign countries to receive those Sacraments; and as it might happen at times, that no one be found among the subjects of the United States qualified to be entrusted with the spiritual government, whether as Bishop or as Prefect-Apostolic, it would be necessary in such cases that Congress be pleased to consent that the choice be made among the Bishops of a foreign nation, the most friendly to the United States.<sup>14</sup>

Shea tells us that the Nuncio transmitted also to the French Minister in the United States, the Chevalier de la Luzerne, a similar letter addressed to the "Senior Catholic Missionary in the United States." Note B is a résumé of Franklin's reply to the Nuncio. The American Minister, after mature reflection on the matter contained in the Nuncio's letter of July 28, decided that "it would be absolutely useless to send it to Congress, which, according to its power and constitution, cannot and should not in any case intervene in the ecclesiastical affairs of any sect of religion established in America." Mr. Franklin was of the opinion that the Holy See was entirely free in taking whatever measures might be useful to the Catholics of America, without infringing the Constitution, and that Congress would not fail to give a tacit approval of the choice made by the Sacred Congregation. But, as the Note goes on to say, it was understood that the choice in question would be "of a French ecclesiastic; who

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

residing in France, may regulate the spiritual affairs of the Catholics who live, or who may come to establish themselves, in those States, through a suffragan residing in America."

*Observations on the Note of M. the Apostolic Nuncio*

Mr. Franklin, after reading the note of M. the Nuncio and reflecting upon it maturely, believes that it would be absolutely useless to send it to the Congress, which, according to its power and constitution cannot and should not, in any case, intervene in the ecclesiastical affairs of any sect or of any religion established in America. Each particular state has reserved to itself by its own constitution the right to protect its members, to tolerate their religious opinions and not to interfere with the matter, as long as they do not disturb civil order.

Mr. Franklin is therefore of opinion that the Court of Rome may take, of its own initiative, all the measures that may be useful to the Catholics of America, without disregard to the constitutions and that Congress will not fail to give its tacit approval to the choice that the Court of Rome in concert with the minister of the United States may make of a French Ecclesiastic who, residing in France, may regulate the spiritual affairs of the Catholics who may live or who may come to establish themselves in those states through a suffragan residing in America.

Besides many political reasons that may make that arrangement desirable, the Apostolic Nuncio must find in it many others that may be favorable to the intentions of the Court of Rome.<sup>15</sup>

The third Note (C) contained the surprising suggestion about the English colleges. The Cardinal-Prefect had stressed the necessity of maintenance for the vicar-apostolic of the new Republic, and Franklin suggests to the Nuncio that, since there is in America no college or establishment where a Catholic ecclesiastic might receive the necessary preparation, the four monasteries of the English Benedictine monks, the annual revenues of which amounted to almost 60,000 *livres*, might be used for this purpose. "It is possible," so runs Note C, "that the King of France, to please the Court of Rome and to strengthen the bonds of friendship with the United States, would permit these establishments to train, instruct, and in part support the ecclesiastics who would be used in America."

The American revolution, by separating the interest of the colonies from those of the mother country changes the relations that bound the

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

Catholics of America with those who live in the English dominion. The unity of the present government seems to require that those bonds be diminished and weakened by taking from the British ministry all influence over the subjects of the United States.

In the greater number of the colonies, there is no endowment, no fixed revenue, for the support of a clergy of whatever denomination; Legislature, viewing this subject from the standpoint of a more general freedom, has been unwilling to make a public charge of a tax that should be only voluntary and private. Neither is there a college or public establishment where a Catholic ecclesiastic may receive necessary instruction. These are two equally essential points to be considered.

There are in France four establishments of English monks, the total revenues of which may amount to 50,000 or 60,000 *livres*. These monks are few. The want of subjects makes those who remain useless at least.

It is possible that the King of France to please the Court of Rome, and to strengthen the bonds of friendship with the United States, would permit these establishments to train, instruct and in part support the ecclesiastics who would be used in America.

It would be expedient that one of the Bishops named by the Holy See should be a subject of the king, residing in France, in a position, always, to act in accordance with the Nuncio of His Holiness and the American minister, and to adopt with them the means of training the ecclesiastics, which might be agreeable to Congress and useful to American Catholics.<sup>16</sup>

From these three memoranda it is clear that a definite policy regarding the American Church had been decided upon between March and September, 1783. Cardinal Antonelli's concession that a foreigner might be chosen as head of the American Church was evidently being made capital of in Paris, and whoever originated the scheme found in Franklin a willing tool in the project for subjecting his Catholic fellow-citizens to a foreign superior, nominated by French influence and residing in France. The Nuncio was not favorably disposed toward the suggestion that the property of the Anglo-Benedictine Congregation be confiscated for the purpose of educating priests for the American Mission.<sup>17</sup> Vergennes also saw the injustice of the proposal and intimated to the Nuncio that Talleyrand would be the proper official to consult in this aspect of the affair. By September, 1783, therefore, the French scheme was fully developed. Besides

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

<sup>17</sup> TAUNTON, *English Black Monks*, vol. ii, chapters xvii-xix. London, 1897.

a French vicar-apostolic for the United States, with episcopal character, who would rule the Church here through a suffragan or vicar-general, an American Seminary was to be erected in one of the sea-coast towns of France, supported by the revenues of the English monastic establishments in France which were to be confiscated for this purpose. How much money would be necessary for the project would depend upon the number of priests needed in the United States. The Nuncio called on Talleyrand and a conference was agreed upon between Doria Pamphili, Talleyrand and Vergennes at Versailles. The Prime Minister and the Bishop of Autun both showed themselves desirous of carrying out the American Seminary plan. Accordingly, the Nuncio was directed to ask at Rome for further information on the American mission: namely, the number of priests already in the States, and the number that was still needed for the Church there. The Nuncio intended also, he tells Antonelli, to ask Vergennes to inquire from de la Luzerne, then French Minister at New York, "and who is much esteemed and loved there," for information on these two points.

As we have seen, the American clergy, although ignorant up to this time of the intrigue, had already begun to create their own organization during the peace year (1783-1784). The Whitmarsh meeting of the clergy on June 27, 1783, had decided upon a Chapter form of government. Father John Lewis, the Vicar-General of the London Vicar-Apostolic up to the outbreak of the war, was the acknowledged head of the Church in the United States down to the General Chapter of the American Clergy, on November 6, 1783, when his nomination as superior for the whole Mission was sent to Rome. News of the proceedings of the June meeting had no doubt been reported to the Nuncio, for his letter of September 1, 1783, as has been seen above, contains a rather emphatic suggestion that silence on the whole plan should be kept: "On the other hand, Your Eminence will deign to inform neither the ecclesiastic just mentioned (the superior of the Mission in the United States) nor anyone else, with the exception of the Holy Father, of my negotiations with the Count de Vergennes and with Monseigneur the Bishop of Autun, since it is a question, as yet, of mere project, of which it would not be well to speak before it be realized, or developed



sufficiently not to be frustrated by anyone who may regard the proposed establishment unfavorably."

There were, indeed, several quarters from which opposition might legitimately be expected. The English Benedictines in France had dwindled to a mere shadow of their former greatness; St. Edmund's Monastery in Paris, for example, was reduced to such a state that during the latter half of the eighteenth century "it was seriously considered whether it would not be as well to disband the house altogether."<sup>18</sup> All the English religious houses in France were indeed to be swept away in the whirlwind of the French Revolution ten years later, their sequestration taking place on February 18, 1793, a few days after the declaration of war between England and France;<sup>19</sup> but no religious Order, with the great antiquity of the Anglo-Benedictine Congregation behind it, could acquiesce without a protest in the heartless project contained in Franklin's Note C to the Nuncio. There was a lack of generosity in the plan if, as Taunton states, Benjamin Franklin during his stay in Paris (1776-1784), was a constant guest at St. Edmund's Monastery.<sup>20</sup> Another source of opposition was naturally the American Catholics themselves. Priests and people were thoroughly imbued with the spirit of independence—at that time more intense in American life than ever afterwards; and the proposal to place them under a "foreign prince or potentate," was obnoxious to a nation which had just forged its way to freedom, and at such awful cost. Whether the English Benedictines became aware of the Franklin proposal we do not know. Both Taunton and Ward are silent on the matter, and both had access to archives which should have contained documents on the subject had it been discussed.

We know that the French vicar-apostolic project was first made known to Carroll through former English associates. Carroll expressed his great surprise, as we have seen, in a letter to Plowden, dated September 15, 1784, that his old friend Dr. Franklin had become a party to the Nuncio's intrigue,<sup>21</sup> which, however, was not meeting with the success its leaders expected.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 287.

<sup>19</sup> WARD, *Dawn of the Catholic Revival in England*, vol. ii, p. 78. London, 1909.

<sup>20</sup> TAUNTON, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 285.

<sup>21</sup> SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 218 note.

On September 27, 1783, Antonelli wrote to the Papal Nuncio at Paris, telling him that the Holy Father, Pius VI (1775-1799), had greatly commended his zeal and sagacity in having obtained the active coöperation of Vergennes and Talleyrand "in this salutary work." He reminds the Nuncio that "this Holy Congregation does not withdraw from its original offer to assist in the support of a vicar-apostolic endowed with episcopal character, or of a bishop, if this should be preferred, whom it will be necessary to put at the head of the Catholics in the United States." Very wisely, Antonelli rejected "without further discussion" the Franklin project of suppressing the four monasteries of English Benedictines in France. Antonelli's letter of this date is one of the most interesting in this correspondence:

*September 27, 1783.*

Your Lordship has so well begun the great matter of a plan for missions in the provinces of the new republic of the United States of North America that I do not doubt that you will soon bring it to a most happy termination. The Holy Father, who has been informed of your action, has greatly commended your zeal, and your sagacity in having interested the Count of Vergennes and Monseigneur the Bishop of Autun in this salutary work, the former, for his protection as worthy Prime Minister, the latter, for the subsistence of the new workers, in view of his ministry of ecclesiastical benefices in that kingdom. This Holy Congregation, however, does not withdraw from its original offer to assist in the support of the Vicar-Apostolic endowed with the episcopal character, or of a bishop, if this should be preferred, whom it will be necessary to put at the head of the Catholics in the United States.

Conformably with the judicious suggestions of Your Lordship, the following points should be established:

I. The proposition of Mr. Franklin, to suppress the four monasteries of English-Benedictines that exist in France, should be rejected, without further discussion. Besides the odium that would be aroused in the nation, which would be highly displeasing to the pacific and generous spirit of His Most Christian Majesty, grievous injury would be done to the missions of England, if the four monasteries in question should be suppressed, since the English Benedictine Congregation, which furnishes nearly forty missionaries who work for the good of souls in England, would be reduced to the one monastery that, with the four in France, constitutes the total number of the convents of the worthy Congregation.

II. The Nuncio to France, as Your Lordship opportunely suggested to Mr. Franklin, should have the supervision of these American missions, as is the case with the Nuncio at Brussels for the missions of Holland, and he would come to an understanding with the minister of the United

States at Paris, whenever it was necessary to act in accordance with him for the greater good of those missions. This arrangement would also be compatible with an agent of the Vicar-Apostolic, or of the Bishop to be established in the United States, at Paris, in the person of some French ecclesiastic, who, upon occasion, would act in concert with the minister of those States and with the Nuncio. It is to be desired that, some day, this new republic may have a Catholic minister at Paris; but, in the present circumstances, in which the minister is heretical, possibly Presbyterian, or Non-Conformist, which are the dominant sects in those states, it would be desirable to have a French ecclesiastic in private correspondence between the Nuncio and the minister.

III. It was suggested above, and is repeated now, that it appears very necessary to establish that the superior, who is to have jurisdiction over all the Catholics of the American Republic, be invested with the character of bishop, with the title of Vicar-Apostolic, or, if acceptable, that he be the bishop of a diocese in that country. He may take his title from any city in the provinces of that republic that may seem to be the one best adapted for his residence. As the greater number of Catholics are in Maryland and in Pennsylvania, it would appear that the residence should be established in one of these two states; but it will be better to determine this point according to what may be most satisfactory to the minister and to the states. There is no doubt that all the missionaries should depend upon the Vicar-Apostolic, or Bishop, and receive from him their powers and destination among the various stations, according to requirements. And to that end, the Prelate will be invested with the most ample powers, as for instance, those of the first formula.

IV. As to the subjects to be chosen, for the vicariate-apostolic, or the episcopacy, as well as for missionaries, present conditions seem clearly to indicate that they should be taken from among the ecclesiastical subjects of His Most Christian Majesty. But if in time any native should be found available for the sacred ministry, there is no doubt that the Vicar or Bishop would be free to ordain him, and to employ him in the missions.

V. It would be most useful to establish a college for the sole benefit of these missionaries, at Nantes, St. Malo, l'Orient, or some other place, near the ocean; but it may be foreseen that the magnitude of the idea would make its realization difficult. It is clearly understood that Monseigneur d'Autun, by his favour, could overcome all obstacles; but great and expensive things, as would be the creation of a new college, should not be sought.

VI. Consideration might be given, therefore, to the idea of increasing to some extent the income of the Seminary of Foreign Missions, where ecclesiastics, already, are trained for the East Indies; or better still, the Seminary of Saint Esprit, the ecclesiastics of which are destined to the missions of South America, at Cayenne and Guiana, imposing upon it the obligation of maintaining there, for the present, a reasonable number of ecclesiastics, to be sent under the suggested authority in America to

the provinces of the United States. If, to begin, eight or ten missionaries are sent, besides the vicar, or bishop, this will provide sufficiently for the needs of the faithful in question, the number of whom is not precisely known to this Holy Congregation, which is also without exact information of the number of the old workers, who, for the greater part, were of the suppressed Society of Jesus; for, neither directly, nor through the Vicar-Apostolic of London, has news been received concerning those Catholics, of whom some information was sent to Your Lordship in the instruction of the 15th of January of the present year.

VII. If the number of workers suggested should prove to be insufficient, it will be time, then, to think of other means of study for a greater number of subjects, and it will be possible, even, if there be a desire to form a national clergy, to establish at the College of the Propaganda, here, two or three places for Americans, as has been done for so many nations of Asia, Africa, and Europe.

Your Lordship, however, who is better informed of the state of affairs, will know which of the points noted above should be communicated to the minister, and which not; upon this point, His Holiness and this Congregation repose on your known zeal and activity, of which there are so many exceptional proofs; and thanking Your Lordship for the letter which you enclosed from Monseigneur the Vicar-Apostolic of London, I remain, with all esteem, heartily yours, etc.<sup>22</sup>

The hierarchical character of the French project as outlined by Antonelli was as follows: At the head of American ecclesiastical affairs would be the Papal Nuncio in Paris, who would, as Ordinary, act with the knowledge and understanding of the American Minister in Paris, "whenever it was necessary to act in accordance with him for the greater good of those missions." Subordinate to the Nuncio would be a French vicar-apostolic or bishop, with an official agent at Paris, who would act in concert with the American Minister and with the Nuncio. Antonelli hoped that some day the new Republic might have a Catholic Minister at Paris, but until that should occur, it would be best to have a French ecclesiastic act as agent for the American Mission. Apart from this, there would always be, he explained, "the formal correspondence between the Nuncio and the minister." The third point in Antonelli's letter is quite significant: It is becoming more evident, in fact, it appears very necessary, to appoint a Bishop for the United States, who should have his See in that country. Since the greater number of Catholics live in

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<sup>22</sup> *Prop. Arch., Lettere*, vol. 242, f. 753; *Fish-Devitt Transcripts*, pp. 14-17.



Maryland and in Pennsylvania, it would appear, he says, that the bishop's see should be established in either one of these two States. Whoever is appointed, whether as bishop or as vicar-apostolic, should have episcopal jurisdiction over the Church in the States. The choice of an ecclesiastic to occupy this post is clearly indicated by present conditions—"he should be taken from among the ecclesiastical subjects of His Most Christian Majesty." Not only was the ecclesiastical head to be chosen, but the missionaries also for the Church in the new Republic, were to be selected from among the French clergy. If, in the course of time, Antonelli adds, an American be found available for the sacred ministry, "there is no doubt that the vicar or bishop would be free to ordain him, and to employ him in the missions."

It may be necessary for the reader's benefit to emphasize the fact that the ecclesiastic who thus describes the early American Church was not only a cardinal, but was also the Prefect of the Congregation which had for its purpose the propagation of the Faith in non-Catholic lands. There were means at his disposal for a thorough acquaintance with the state of the American Church, but those means were seldom employed. The interest shown in the organization of the Church in the United States in these early years was mainly political and financial, and from this date down to the first Provincial Council of Baltimore in 1829, no impartial reader will be able to accuse the Roman authorities of accurate knowledge of American Catholic affairs in general or of American conditions geographical and otherwise, in particular. The American clergy will be at the mercy of meddlers and at the mercy of badly informed chiefs in the Congregation to which they are obliged to look as to their superiors, until an Archbishop of Baltimore breaks the restraint the American clergy must have felt, and appeals directly to the Pope in a letter which lacks nothing in its indignation at the sad situation in which Roman curial ignorance had placed them.<sup>23</sup>

Antonelli's letter of September 27, 1783, must have been

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<sup>23</sup> Archbishop Neale to Pope Pius VII, Georgetown, March 6, 1817. Cf. SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 34. Cf. Maréchal's Report of 1818 in the *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. i, pp. 439-453. An interesting side-light on the situation will be found in S. B. Morse (of telegraph fame), *Foreign Conspiracy Against the Liberty of the United States*, p. 141. New York, 1835; it was published originally under the pen-name "Brutus," in the *New York Observer* (1834-1835).



written with the cognizance of the plans formulated by the American clergy. He persists, however, in the Franco-American Seminary project. He directs the Nuncio's attention to the idea of combining the Seminary project with either the Seminary of Foreign Missions or the Seminary of the Holy Ghost in Paris. If the income of either of these establishments was to be augmented for the purpose by Talleyrand, they could be required to furnish a certain number of missionaries for the missions in the United States. Eight or ten missionaries, he thinks, would be a sufficient number to send to the United States; but of this he is not quite certain, because the number of Catholics in the United States "is not precisely known to this Holy Congregation, which is also without exact information of the number of the old workers." Later on, he deems, there might be room for a national American College at Rome, for the formation of the national clergy.

On December 15, 1783, Franklin wrote to Vergennes that the delay in the spiritual organization of the American Church was causing him some concern: "I understand that the Bishop or spiritual person who superintends or governs the Roman Catholic clergy in the United States of America resides in London, and is supposed to be under obligations to that Court and subject to be influenced by its Ministers. This gives me some uneasiness, and I cannot but wish that one should be appointed to that office who is of this nation and who may reside here among our friends. I beg Your Excellency to think a little of this matter and afford me your counsels upon it." <sup>24</sup>

"But for this positive evidence," says Shea, "we could scarcely believe that Dr. Franklin lent himself to a plan for treating his Catholic countrymen in this manner and helping a conspiracy to subject them not to a Superior chosen from among themselves, but to one nominated by the French Court and residing in France." <sup>25</sup> Franklin certainly had opportunities in Paris of learning that the Vicar-Apostolic of London had exercised no jurisdiction over the Church in America from the outbreak of the Revolution; Bishop Talbot's refusal to recognize the American Church as part of his charge was too well known at the time

<sup>24</sup> *Researches*, vol. xi, p. 190.

<sup>25</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 215.

to have escaped one so fortunately placed as Franklin. On receiving Franklin's letter, Vergennes made a memorandum, which shows that the Prime Minister was not altogether satisfied about the French vicar-apostolic plan, and that he was better acquainted with the situation than Franklin. "Mr. Franklin," he says, "represents that since the Bishop governing the Catholic Clergy in America resides in London, it is to our interest to name someone for that charge who could reside in the United States." Franklin had already consulted Archbishop de Cicé of Bordeaux on the Seminary subject, doubtless at the suggestion of Talleyrand, as we learn in a letter from de Cicé to Vergennes, dated December 27, 1783: "I regard it a duty, Count, to inform you of the proposition just made me by Mr. Franklin. The object is to secure to religion among the Catholics of the United States more order and facility in the number and choice of ministers necessary for them. I reasonably presume that in this matter Mr. Franklin is the interpreter of the wishes of his Catholic fellow-citizens. He seems to desire that to attain securely what they propose, they should have in France a titled ecclesiastic, appointed to provide for the wants of the Church."<sup>26</sup>

The truth is that Franklin was not only acting blindly in the whole affair, but was proceeding without the knowledge of the Catholic leaders in the new Republic. Certainly his wishes regarding the chief pastor of the flock in the United States were at variance with those of the American clergy, as evidenced in the Whitmarsh meeting of 1783-1784. The Archbishop of Bordeaux, while not a party to the enterprise, was brought into the affair, on account of the Bordeaux American Seminary scheme, of which the correspondence speaks often during these two years. Cicé acted very cautiously, albeit generously, in the matter. Among the Franklin MSS. at the Library of Congress (fol. 2617), there is a letter from the Archbishop of Bordeaux to Franklin, assuring him of his eagerness to second the worthy efforts of Talleyrand and the American minister to supply the American mission with priests, but asking for more detailed information before he gave his consent to the Bordeaux project.<sup>27</sup>

It would appear from a letter of Antonelli to Doria Pamphili,

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 216.

<sup>27</sup> *Recherches*, vol. xxviii, p. 345.

of June 9, 1784, that Talleyrand had first made the proposition that one of the Seminaries in Bordeaux be used for the American Seminary project.

Meanwhile Vergennes' commission to Luzerne had not been neglected. That worthy French gentleman had consulted with the leaders of the American Republic and on January 31, 1784, he wrote to Vergennes from Annapolis, stating that while Congress did not wish to take any action in the matter, which was beyond its competency, the delegates had assured him that a Catholic bishop would be very well received. That part of the letter which touches on the subject is as follows:

Monseigneur the Apostolic Nuncio has made some propositions in the name of His Holiness to Doctor Franklin in regard to the sending of a Bishop or a Vicar-Apostolic whom the Holy Father desires to place over the Roman Catholic Churches of this continent. The Congress has respectfully welcomed that overture; it has been unable, however, to take action in this matter, which is not of the competency of Congress. It is a matter that concerns the Catholics alone; and the delegates who have spoken to me on the subject have assured me that a Catholic bishop would be very well received in the state of Pennsylvania and much more so in Maryland, where there are many Catholics, providing the prelate carefully avoided to assume any temporal jurisdiction or authority. The Congress, in general, would be pleased at the residence of a prelate, who by conferring the sacrament of Holy Orders on the priests of these parts, would relieve them of the necessity of receiving it in London, or in Quebec, as has been done in the past. Some of the delegates even believe that a Catholic bishop would not refuse to confer Holy Orders on the Anglican ministers of America, who until now, have been obliged to procure their ordination at London; but this practice does not seem to me to be compatible to the profession that those who receive Holy Orders must make or with the examination that they must undergo. The State Legislatures and Congress refrain from entangling themselves with religious matters.<sup>28</sup>

This letter was no doubt communicated at once to the Nuncio, who probably sent it to Propaganda. On May 11, 1784, as we have seen from the *Secret Journals of Congress*, one of the resolutions passed was to the effect that Dr. Franklin be requested to notify the Nuncio at Paris of the American policy of non-interference in religious affairs: "*Resolved*, That Doctor Franklin be desired to notify the Apostolic Nuncio at Versailles, that Con-

<sup>28</sup> *Prop. Arch., Scritt. riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 241 *Fish-Devitt Transcripts*, pp. 19-20.

gress will always be pleased to testify their respect to his sovereign and state; but that the subject of his application to Doctor Franklin being purely spiritual, is without the jurisdiction and powers of Congress, who have no authority to permit or refuse it, these powers being reserved to the several states individually,"<sup>29</sup>

This resolution could not have reached Franklin before the end of the summer, but the shrewd American Minister had already arrived at the same conclusion. Antonelli, likewise, was beginning to see the wisdom of appointing one of the American missionaries.<sup>30</sup> Writing to Luzerne under date of May 12, 1784, he states that the Sacred Congregation desires full information of the condition of the Church in the United States. (The four points of information asked for are those which Father Carroll eventually answered on March 1, 1785, in his *Relation*):

Before the American revolution, the Catholics and missionaries of those states, in what concerns religion, were under the vigilance and direction of the Vicar-Apostolic residing in London. That revolution having separated the interests of the United States from those of England, and having entirely changed the government of those states, the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda has seen the necessity of taking other measures for the government of these missions; hence, Monseigneur, the Archbishop of Seleucia, Apostolic Nuncio at Paris, was charged by this Congregation to make on that subject to the Congress of the United States some proposition, not less useful to religion and to the spiritual assistance of the Catholics than acceptable to the government of those States.

Monseigneur the Nuncio mentioned the matter to Mr. Franklin, who, however, answered that, having seriously reflected on it he considered it absolutely useless to refer the question to the Congress, which, by its constitutions and faculties, could not, and should not, entangle itself in ecclesiastical affairs, and consequently, that it was in the power of the Court of Rome to take all measures that might be of advantage to the Catholics of America, without offending the constitutions. After receiving this answer, the Congregation, by order of His Holiness, instructed Mon-

<sup>29</sup> Vol. iii, p. 493. Boston, 1821.

<sup>30</sup> About this time there should have arrived at Rome a letter in Italian (copy in my possession—*Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 223), sent from Maryland, November 10, 1783, and unsigned and unaddressed, which I take to be a translation of Carroll's letter of this date. The Italian version differs from the English and seems to have been made by some one who knew the animus of Americans in general towards "prelacy." At the end of the letter, in Latin, is the information that Father John Lewis was sixty-two years old. It was this fact, not mentioned by the American Committee, which decided Rome to appoint Carroll, who was much younger.



seigneur the Nuncio to agree with the ministers of His Most Christian Majesty, and with the minister of the United States, upon the most desirable means of giving to the missions of North America the stability and development of which they might be capable.

His Most Christian Majesty having wished, on such an occasion, to give a new proof of his piety and of the interest that he takes in the preservation and extension of the Catholic religion in all parts of the world, found no difficulty in agreeing to a plan that is no less useful to the Catholics of the United States than to the government of those provinces; but, to establish a stable condition of things, and to forestall all the objections and difficulties that might present themselves in its realization, it is necessary to have certain information that may make it possible to compass that object.

1st. To have exact knowledge of the conduct and capacities of the ecclesiastics and missionaries who are in the various provinces of North America; which one of them would be the most worthy, and the most acceptable to the assembly of those provinces, to be created Bishop *in partibus* and invested with the character of vicar-Apostolic, considering that it will be desirable to fix the residence in that province in which there is the greatest number of Catholics.

2d. If there be among those ecclesiastics a native of the country who may be among the most worthy, in equality of merits, he would be preferred to any of another nationality; and whenever the provinces would be in lack of missionaries, a Frenchman will be sent to establish himself there, residing in the province suggested above.

3d. To know the number of the ecclesiastics and missionaries, as, also, that of the Catholics in the different provinces and their area, assuming that the greater number of them is to be found in Pennsylvania and Maryland. It would be well, however, to know the same in regard to the other provinces.

4th. To know if there be schools in those provinces, where the Latin language may be learnt, and where those youths who wish to prepare for the ecclesiastic state may have studied the humanities before repairing to France or to Rome for the study of philosophy and of theology.<sup>31</sup>

On this same date, May 12, 1784, the Nuncio also wrote to Luzerne at New York, asking him to assist Propaganda in ascertaining full knowledge of the state of affairs in the Church of the United States. He incloses a letter which he has drawn up by order of Propaganda, which he begs Luzerne to deliver "to one of the oldest missionaries of those provinces." He does not touch in this enclosed letter on the subject of the bishop vicar-apostolic or on the manner of his selection, but he adds that

<sup>31</sup> *Prop. Arch., Scritt. riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 253; *Fish-Devitt Transcripts*, pp. 20-22.



"the ex-Jesuit, Mr. Carroll of Maryland, has been spoken of to me with eulogy, this Carroll being the same who was educated at St. Omer, and who, in 1776, was sent by the Congress to Canada, with Mr. Franklin and other commissioners. I hope that Your Lordship will be pleased to give me information concerning him, and will let me know whether you consider him worthy to be named bishop in *partibus* and vicar-apostolic." <sup>32</sup>

As Shea has intimated, this came about through the English ex-Jesuits, who had become aware of the French intrigue, and Plowden, Carroll's great friend, on hearing of the intrigue, wrote at once to Franklin to dissuade the American minister from the French scheme. Fathers Sewall and Mattingly, natives of Maryland, were then in England, and they added their protests to that of Plowden, explaining to Franklin that out of respect and consideration for the missionaries then in the United States no appointment should be made without their participation and consent. Plowden tells this to Carroll in his letter dated September 2, 1784. It is not certain that this intervention preceded the letter of the Nuncio to Luzerne of May 12, 1784, but from this time on the French scheme was doomed. Franklin's eyes were opened, says Shea, and as he knew John Carroll personally, "he must have felt not a little chagrined to find himself made even indirectly the medium of impeaching the loyalty of the Carrolls and other patriotic American Catholics, priests and laymen. It is certain that he at once determined that sound policy required him to favor the appointment of an American missionary as Superior of the Catholics in the United States, and he certainly from this time exerted all his influence to press the appointment of Rev. Mr. Carroll, to whose qualifications he could bring the testimony of personal knowledge and daily intercourse for a considerable period." <sup>33</sup>

Meanwhile, the project was dragging itself tediously to an end. On May 17, 1784, Doria Pamphili wrote to Antonelli (referring to his letter of April 26), stating that, on May 3, a conference was held at Versailles on the very important matter of the government of the missions in the province of the new Republic of the United States of North America, with Vergennes, Talley-

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

<sup>33</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 216-219.

rand, and himself present. The Prime Minister read Luzerne's dispatch from Annapolis of January 31, 1784. The Nuncio gave an abstract of His Eminence's letter of September 27, 1783. The chief matter discussed at the conference was the supply of the clergy for the American missions. It was decided that the Nuncio should send two letters; one to Luzerne and the other to one of the missionaries in America (those mentioned above, May 12, 1784), asking for information on the needs of the Church in the United States. The place to educate the students for the American missions was also discussed. Paris, it was decided, would not be desirable, since only philosophy, canon and civil law, and theology were taught in the Seminaries there. The students would need a college education before beginning these studies, and for this purpose Talleyrand suggested that the Archbishop of Bordeaux, an intimate friend of the Bishop of Autun, should be asked to arrange for the reception of these students in one of the Seminaries in Bordeaux.

Since Mr. Franklin had spoken to him of the merits and good reputation of Father Carroll, the Nuncio hopes that the Holy See will be pleased to hear this, and he avers that Franklin and many members of Congress would welcome Carroll's appointment to the vicariate to be established in America.

The letter which the Nuncio inclosed in his dispatch to Luzerne, on May 12, 1784, addressed to "one of the missionaries living in America," was as follows:

The interests of religion requiring that new information be had of the missions that are established in the United States of North America, the Congregation of the Propaganda has ordered me to ask you for detailed information of the present conditions of those missions. I beg of you to let me know, at the same time, what number of missionaries would be necessary for the service of those stations, and to secure spiritual assistance to the Catholic subjects of the United States; which are the provinces where there are Catholics, and where the greatest number of Catholics are to be found, and lastly, whether there be, among the natives of that country, subjects available to receive Holy Orders and to exercise the functions of a missionary. I shall be very thankful to you, personally, for the precision and celerity with which you may be kind enough to procure and to forward this information for me.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> *Prop. Arch., Scrit. riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 261; *Fish-Devitt Transcripts*, pp. 27-29.

Luzerne had probably left for France when the letter arrived, and the Chargé d'affaires, Marbois, informed Reyneval, Vergennes' secretary, on August 15, 1784, that he had sent the letter to Mr. Charles Carroll, asking him to give it to the oldest missionary. Shea says that this letter was addressed by the Nuncio to the Rev. John Carroll.<sup>35</sup> This is no doubt incorrect. Mr. Charles Carroll was asked by Marbois to give it to the oldest missionary and he relieved himself of responsibility in the matter by sending it to his cousin, Father Carroll. Father Carroll was not the oldest missionary, nor was he the superior of the clergy at that time, but he was known to Franklin, and his reply would probably have greater weight with that statesman in the matter under consideration. On May 31, 1784, the Nuncio informed Antonelli that he had sent to Vergennes copies of the two letters of May 12, one to Luzerne and one to the oldest missionary. On June 9, 1784, the negotiations were brought to an abrupt close by the action of the Holy See in appointing John Carroll "head of the missions in the provinces of the new Republic of the United States of North America."

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<sup>35</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 221.

## CHAPTER XIV

### APPOINTMENT OF FATHER JOHN CARROLL AS PREFECT- APOSTOLIC

(1784-1785)

The appointment of Father John Carroll had a double effect: that of officially ending the jurisdiction of the Vicar-Apostolic of London over the Catholics in the former English colonies, and that of giving to the Church in the United States its own autonomy under the jurisdiction of Propaganda. We have for this date, June 9, 1784, a letter from Antonelli to the Nuncio, which states that John Carroll had been appointed Prefect-Apostolic of the United States on that day, and refers to the fact that prior to the Nuncio's dispatch of May 17, 1784, the Congregation of Propaganda had received the Petition from the priests in America in which they requested that Father Lewis should be constituted their Superior. Antonelli enclosed copies of other letters for the Nuncio's perusal, and pointed out that Carroll's name is the last place among the nominees sent by the American missionaries. "This fact shows," he says, "that Carroll has not coöperated with the earnest solicitation of Mr. Franklin in his behalf, and, consequently, it has helped to give him the preference over Lowis [*sic*], who, moreover, being 64 years of age, as the letters in question show, would seem to deserve a rest. We are not informed of the age of Carroll [he was then 49 years old], but it may be assumed to be a much more vigorous one than that of Lowis [*sic*], since he is named last in the petition."<sup>1</sup>

A second letter of this same date, June 9, 1784, enclosed in the one to the Nuncio and addressed to Father Carroll, which the new Superior received on November 26, 1784, announced officially to the Church in America the decision reached by the Holy See:

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<sup>1</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Lettere*, vol. 244, f. 487; *Fish-Devitt Transcripts*, p. 30.

*Rome, June 9, 1784.**Very Rev. Sir:*

In order to preserve and defend Catholicity in the Thirteen United States of North America, the Supreme Pontiff of the Church, Pius VI, and this Sacred Congregation have thought it extremely proper to designate a pastor who should, permanently and independently of any ecclesiastical power, except the same Sacred Congregation, attend to the spiritual necessities of the Catholic flock. In the appointment of such a pastor, the Sacred Congregation would have readily cast its eyes on the Rev. John Lewis if his advanced age and the labors he has already undergone in the vineyard of the Lord had not deterred it from imposing on him a new and very heavy burden; for he seems to require repose rather than arduous labor. As then, Rev. Sir, you have given conspicuous proofs of piety and zeal, and it is known that your appointment will please and gratify many members of that republic, and especially Mr. Franklin, the eminent individual who represents the same republic at the court of the Most Christian King, the Sacred Congregation, with the approbation of his Holiness, has appointed you Superior of the Mission in the thirteen United States of North America, and has communicated to you the faculties, which are necessary to the discharge of that office; faculties which are also communicated to the other priests of the same States, except the administration of Confirmation, which is reserved for you alone, as the enclosed documents will show.

These arrangements are meant to be only temporary. For it is the intention of his Holiness soon to charge a Vicar-Apostolic, invested with the title and character of bishop, with the care of those states, that he may attend to ordination and other episcopal functions. But, to accomplish this design, it is of great importance that we should be made acquainted with the state of the orthodox religion in those thirteen states. Therefore we request you to forward to us, as soon as possible, a correct report, stating carefully the number of Catholics in each state; what is their condition, their piety and what abuses exist; also how many missionary priests labor now in that vineyard of the Lord; what are their qualifications, their zeal, their mode of support. For though the Sacred Congregation wish not to meddle with temporal things, it is important for the establishment of laborers, that we should know what are the ecclesiastical revenues, if any there are, and it is believed there are some. In the meantime for fear the want of missionaries should deprive the Catholics of spiritual assistance, it has been resolved to invite hither two youths from the states of Maryland and Pennsylvania, to educate them at the expense of the Sacred Congregation in the Urban College; they will afterwards, on returning to their country, be substitutes in the mission. We leave to your solicitude the care of selecting and sending them. You will make choice of those who have more promising talents and a good constitution, who are not less than twelve, nor more than fifteen years of age; who by their proficiency in the sanctuary may give great hopes of themselves. You may address them to the excellent



Archbishop of Seleucia, Apostolic Nuncio at Paris, who is informed of their coming. If the young men selected are unable to defray the expenses of the voyage, the Sacred Congregation will provide for them; we even wish to be informed by you frankly and accurately of the necessary travelling expenses, to serve as a rule for the future. Such are the things I have to signify to you; and whilst I am confident you will discharge the office committed to you with all zeal, solicitude and fidelity, and more than answer the high opinion we have formed of you, I pray God that he may grant you all peace and happiness.

L. CARD. ANTONELLI,  
*Prefect.*

STEPHEN BORGIA,  
*Secretary.*<sup>2</sup>

On June 19, 1784, Cardinal Antonelli announced to the London Vicar-Apostolic, Bishop Talbot, the end of English ecclesiastical rule in the former colonies:

*To his Lordship James Talbot, Bishop of Birta, Vicar-Apostolic in the Kingdom of England, London:*

As the Catholics inhabiting the thirteen United States of America have been forbidden by the magistrates of that Republic to have any longer as their Superiors, Vicars-Apostolic dwelling in foreign countries, and as for the preservation of religion the missionaries dwelling there have petitioned the Holy See to provide for their spiritual necessities, the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda with the approbation of His Holiness Pius VI, has appointed as Superior of said Mission John Carroll, a man of approved virtue and ability, and has granted to him all necessary and proper faculties independently of any ecclesiastical jurisdiction save that of the Sacred Congregation. Furthermore, His Holiness judges it fitting to appoint and intends shortly to appoint for those provinces a Bishop or Vicar-Apostolic with episcopal title and character who shall have power to administer to the faithful all the offices of religion that require episcopal authority. I, therefore, hasten to communicate this to your Lordship, to whom the spiritual care of those Catholics was formerly entrusted; not doubting that the foresight of this Congregation in providing for the welfare of religion will be most pleasing to your Lordship also, I pray that God may prolong your life and protect you.<sup>3</sup>

Father Carroll received the news of his appointment from several sources: namely, August 20, 1784, Father Thorpe's letter of June 9, from Rome; September 17-18, 1784, Father Charles Plowden's letter of July 3, from England; November 7-8, 1784,

<sup>2</sup> SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 243-245, from *Propaganda Archives, Lettere*, vol. 244, f. 492; original in *Baltimore Cathedral Archives, Letter-Books*, vol. ii.

<sup>3</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Lettere*, vol. 244, f. 524; cf. *Fish-Devitt Transcripts*, p. 35.

Barbé de Marbois' letter of October 27, from New York; November 26, 1784, Cardinal Antonelli's letter of June 9, from Rome.

Father Thorpe's letter of June 9 announced his appointment, the nature of the faculties imparted by Propaganda, particularly the power of administering Confirmation, and stated that as soon as the necessary information of the state of the Church in America reached Propaganda, the Holy See would promote him to the dignity and character of a bishop. This letter, as we have seen, Carroll presented to his brethren at the Whitemarsh Chapter on October 11, 1784. The Chapter thereupon passed three important resolutions already referred to, which are based on the decision that a Superior *in spiritualibus* was adequate "to the present exigencies of religion in this country": (1) that a bishop was unnecessary; (2) that if one be sent (i.e., not elected by themselves), he should not be entitled to support from the clergy estates; (3) that a Committee of Three (Fathers Diderick, Matthews, and Mosley) be empowered to send a *Memorial* to Rome against the appointment of a bishop.<sup>4</sup>

Father Charles Plowden's letter of July 3, 1784, was answered by Carroll on September 15, 1784. (He mentions having received the news already from Father Thomas Talbot, the Procurator of the dissolved English Jesuit Province)<sup>5</sup>

The letter of Barbé de Marbois, French Chargé d'affaires, at New York, dated October 27, 1784, reached Carroll on November 8. "I congratulate myself," Marbois says, "in being one of the first to assure you that this choice will give general satisfaction." Accompanying this letter was the dispatch from Cardinal Antonelli to "Mr. John Carroll, Superior of the Missions in the thirteen United States of North America," authorizing him to publish the Jubilee of 1775-1776, which was especially extended to the United States. The proclamation of this Jubilee was the first official act of the new Superior.

The official documents of his election to the Superiorship sent by Cardinal Antonelli on June 9, reached Father Carroll at Rock Creek on November 26, 1784. Cardinal Antonelli's letter, as given above, emphasized the one point in the official decree of

<sup>4</sup> HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, p. 633.

<sup>5</sup> HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, pp. 632-633.

appointment which gave Father Carroll most concern, namely, the nature and extent of his dependence on Propaganda.

Shea has summed up the effect of this letter in the following paragraph: "The action of the Holy See had given the Catholics in the United States a separate organization; but among priests and people who had just emerged from the oppressed condition so long maintained by the penal laws, the temporary tenure of the Prefect, his absolute dependence on the Propaganda, and the extremely limited powers given him, were the source of much uneasiness."<sup>6</sup>

No one felt more uneasy over the embarrassing situation caused by his appointment than Father Carroll himself. We have seen how decided his views were from the beginning on the question of having the American Church under what he and others called "Foreign Domination." The appointment was not at all to his liking. "He had a decided repugnance to accept any position, and especially one merely at their pleasure, from the Congregation de Propaganda Fide; to accept it hampered by restrictions and little power for good was a step from which he shrank." The action taken by the Chapter in October, 1784, left him free to decline the appointment. Our only means of following his deliberations on the question of acceptance is in his correspondence with his fellow priests, as a result of the Circular he issued about this time to the clergy announcing his appointment and asking for their guidance in the matter. This circular contained the statement: "Nothing but the present extreme necessity of some spiritual powers here could induce me to act under a commission, which may produce, if long continued, and it should become public, the most dangerous jealousy."<sup>7</sup>

Some of this correspondence has survived, and in a special manner, the letters of his two friends of Philadelphia, Fathers Molyneux and Farmer, are important, for they undoubtedly had a great share in his decision. Father Molyneux had been in correspondence with Carroll all through the year 1784, owing to the Wharton-Carroll controversy, and had been instrumental in securing important data from the library of James Logan for Carroll's reply to the apostate. Shortly after Father Thorpe's

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 245-246.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251 note.

letter had become known to the clergy, Father Molyneux wrote to Carroll, September 18, 1784, telling him of the great joy he experienced in learning that the Holy See had chosen Carroll for the post. "It is our humble opinion," he wrote, "that you should not hesitate one moment in giving your consent. *In negotio tanti momenti digitus Dei haud dubium est*. We shall henceforth esteem it our duty daily to remember you *ad altare*. May God grant us all grace to be ever thankful, and by our lives and conversations show that we are not undeserving. It has been my uniform opinion that no one was so fit for the sacred character."<sup>8</sup> This sentiment he reiterates in letters dated from Philadelphia, November 18, November 25, and December 7, 1784. "A refusal on your part," he writes, "or an objection of any of our gentlemen [the ex-Jesuits] might prove fatal to their fortune and existence in this country, and perhaps so to the cause of religion." Father Farmer, to whom he showed his letters, urged Carroll to reply at once to Propaganda, accepting the post:

*Philadelphia, January 19, 1785.*

*Plurimum Reverende Dne:*

Having read the circular letter of your reverence, I thought it my duty to communicate, with due respect and submission, some objections which occurred to me, being notwithstanding, determined to be united, and to stand by your reverence's resolution. The first objection is, that the communication of the circular letter will cause a delay, in our district, of some months, we being all far separated from one another, and some deprived of the benefit of the post. This delay must be extended to a year or years, if we are to receive no supplies till the affair or subject of the letter is finished; for the court of Rome moves exceedingly slow. Another objection I cannot help making to the idea of our being a body of clergy, and no more missionaries. For I cannot conceive how we could be a body without a bishop for a head. We may have a voluntary union among ourselves, I allow; but as in worldly matters we were heretofore united by the bands of the society, yet never made a corporation or body politic, not being declared so by the government; in a similar manner, I suppose, our voluntary union *in spiritualibus* cannot constitute us a canonical body of clergy, unless declared and appointed as such, either by the supreme pastor, or rather by a bishop set over us by him. Our association, even *in temporalibus* I am afraid, will be looked upon rather as a combination. These are my thoughts; but as you are appointed

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<sup>8</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 5-K1; cf. *United States Catholic Miscellany*, vol. iii, pp. 378-379.

to preside over us, it is to your reverence the Giver of all gifts will bestow the gift of discernment and discretion.

*Commendo me impense.*

*I am, very reverend sir, etc.,*

*Your most humble and obed't serv't,*

FERDINAND FARMER.<sup>9</sup>

In the Baltimore Cathedral Archives (Case 9A-F1) there is the rough sketch of a Circular, dated January 12, 1785, which Carroll issued regarding the Jubilee of 1775-1776. "The commencement of this grant is to date from November 28, 1784, and it is to be in force till November 28, 1785. A commission was sent me at the same time to publish it in all the countries subject to these states." At the end of this letter is the announcement that, until "I have better opportunity of conversing with the several gentlemen to fix a general and equitable rule for keeping Lent for all the different Congregations, I request each of you to make such regulations (for this year) for those under your charge, as you shall in prudence think proper." This is the language of a Superior. Father Carroll had evidently concluded to accept the prefectship-apostolic by this time, but before doing so he decided to place the whole affair with its proper light before the authorities at Rome. A long letter, written on February 17, 1785, to his friend Father Thorpe at Rome, is a summary of the ecclesiastical situation created by the appointment. The rough draft of this *Letter*, with many erasures and corrections, is in the Baltimore Cathedral Archives. It is printed here in full; Shea has used excerpts from it:

*Maryland, near Georgetown, Feb. 17, 1785.*

The official information of the advices sent by you June 9th, 1784, was only received Nov. 26th. I did myself the honour of writing to you on the subject, immediately after receiving your letter, which was about the 20th of August, and of thanking you most cordially for your active and successful endeavours to render service to this country. I say successful, not because your partiality, as I presume, joined to that of my old and cheerful friend Dr. Franklin suggested me to the consideration of his Holiness; but because you have obtained some form of spiritual government to be adopted for us. It is not indeed quite such as we wish; and it

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<sup>9</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives, Case 3-P6; cf. United States Catholic Miscellany, vol. iii, p. 800.*



cannot continue long in its present form. You well know, that in our free and jealous government, where Catholics are admitted into all public councils equally with the professors of any other Religion, it will never be suffered that their Ecclesiastical Superior (be he a Bishop or Prefect-Apostolic), receive his appointment from a foreign State, and only hold it at the discretion of a foreign tribunal or congregation. If even the present temper, or inattention of our Executive and legislative bodies were to overlook it for this and perhaps a few more instances, still ought we not to acquiesce and rest quiet in actual enjoyment; for the consequence, sooner or later, would certainly be, that some malicious or jealous-minded person would raise a spirit against us, and under pretence of rescuing the State from foreign influence and dependence, strip us perhaps of our common civil rights. For these reasons, every thinking man amongst us is convinced, that we neither must request or admit any other foreign interference than such, as being essential to our religion, is implied in the acknowledgment of the Bishop of Rome, by divine appointment, head of the universal Church; and the See of St. Peter being the centre of ecclesiastical unity.

I am well aware that these suggestions will sound ungrateful at Rome, and that the mention of them from us will be perhaps imputed by some of the officers of the propaganda to a remaining spirit of Jesuitism; but I own to you, that tho' I wish to treat with them upon terms of sincere unanimity and cordial concurrence in all matters tending to the service of Religion, yet I do not feel myself disposed to sacrifice to the fear of giving offence the permanent interests of Religion. I mean candidly and respectfully to state our present situation; the spirit of our people; and the sentiments of the R. Catholics, the principal of whom are ready and desirous to transmit to Rome their opinion on the probable consequences of such a spiritual government, as is laid down in my dispatches from yr city. Whether I shall transmit their opinion under their own signature, I am yet uncertain; I would wish to avoid giving the Congregation, or any other person the smallest reason to suspect a cabal to defeat their measures; and if plain and honest representation will not succeed with them, I should fear the effects of intemperate obstinacy.

That you may judge of these matters yourself, I must inform you, that my dispatches contained, 1st the decree of the Congn. of the Propgda., appointing me Superior of the Missions in the Thirteen U. States, *ad suum beneplacitum . . . cum auctoræ ea exercendi, quæ ad earundem Missionum regimen pertinent, ad proscriptum decretorum sacrae Congnis. et facultatum eidem [nihi] concessarum et non alias nec alio modo.* 2-ly. An order from his Holiness, empowering me to administer Confirmation. 3-ly. A letter from Cardl. Antonelli, advising that His Holiness has extended to these States the Jubilee of 1776. 4-ly. Another letter from him and one likewise from the Nuncio at Paris, desiring me to send two youths to be educated in the College of the Propgda. 5-ly. In the same letter Cardl. Antonelli wishes to know the number of our Clergy, and the amount of their incomes: for tho' the Congregation means not to

meddle in temporalibus, yet conceiving and believing there are Church possessions here, it is proper for them to know how many Clergymen can be maintained from them. 6-ly. He further informs that his Holiness means hereafter to appoint a Bishop Vicar-apostolic; but neither insinuates when or whom. 7-ly. In the faculties sent me, which with respect to matrimonial dispensations, are too much restricted, for our exigencies, I am particularly charged to grant no powers or faculties to any who may come into this country, but those quos sacra Congregao. destinaverit et approbaverit. Thus you see the outlines of our future Ecclesiastical government, as it is planned at Rome.

Our objections to it are—1st. We conceive our situation no longer as that of missionaries; and the Ecclesiastical constitution here no longer as that of a mission. By acquiring civil and religious rights in common with other Christians, we are become a national Catholic Clergy; Colleges are now erecting for giving general and liberal education; these Colleges are open, both to masters and scholars of every religious denomination; and as we have every reason to believe, that amongst the youth trained in these different Colleges, there will be frequently some inclined to the Ecclesiastical State, we Catholics propose instituting a Seminary to form them to the virtues of their future state, and to instruct them in Divinity. Thus we shall in a few years, with the blessing of providence, be able to supply this country with labourers in the Lord's vineyard, and keep up a succession, if we are indulged in a Bishop. We are not in immediate want of one, and it will be more agreeable to many of my Brethren not to have any yet appointed; but whenever the time for it comes, we conceive that it will be more advantageous to Religion and less liable to give offence that he be an ordinary Bishop, and not a Vicar-Apostolic, and be chosen and presented to his Holiness by the American Cath. Clergy. 2-ly. For two reasons we think it improper to be subject in our Ecclesiastical government to the Propaganda: the first is, that not being missionaries, we conceive ourselves, not a proper object of their institutions; and the second is, that tho' our free and tolerant forms of Government (in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania) admit us to equal civil rights with other Christians, yet the leading men in our respective States often express a jealousy of any foreign jurisdiction; and surely will be more offended about submitting to it in matters not essential to our faith. I hope they will never object to our depending on the Pope in things purely spiritual; but I am sure there are men, at least in this State, who would blow up a flame of animosity against us, if they suspected that we were to be so much under the government of any Congn. at Rome, as to receive our Superior from it, commissioned only during their good will; and that this Superior was restricted from employing any Clergyman here, but such as that Congregation should direct. I dread so much the consequences of its being known that this last direction was ever given, that I have not thought it proper to mention it to several of my Brethren.

With respect to sending two youths, I shall inform Propaganda that it

would surely be very acceptable to have children educated gratis in so religious a seminary; and very acceptable to us all to have a succession of ministers of the altar thus provided for: but, as I suppose, they will not receive any into their College, but such as shall afterwards be subject to their government; and it being yet uncertain what effect my representations may produce, I shall delay that measure till further information.

I shall in the meantime request permission to give faculties to other Clergymen, than those sent by the Propgda., of whose virtue and talents I shall have sufficient documents. For want of this power, the Catholics in the Jersies, N. Y., the great Western Country, bordering on the lakes, and the Ohio, Wabash, and Mississippi (to say nothing of many in the N. England States and Carolinas) are entirely destitute of spiritual succours. The Catholics in some of these Settlements, have been at the expence of paying the passage of some Irish Franciscans, providing for their subsistence, and in erecting places of worship. These men have brought good testimonials; but I am precluded from giving them any spiritual powers.

I should deem it a singular happiness to have an opportunity of conferring with a person of your experience of the air of Rome, before these representations are given in. But our distance is so great, that I must act according to the best of my own and Brethren's judgment, and commit all I can to your prudent management. At a meeting of some of us last autumn, it was ordered that £ 20-0-0 should be remitted to you as a feeble acknowledgement of our sense of your services and to defray your expence of attendance, etc. Mr. Ashton, who is chosen to be our Manager general, either has or soon will transmit the necessary orders for it. Tho', since my late appointment, I do not intermeddle in our temporal concerns, yet I shall not fail to suggest the propriety of fixing on you, as our agent, a permanent salary: it will be proportioned, not to your zeal and services, but to our poor ability. At the same meeting, but after I had left it thro' indisposition, a direction was given to Messrs. Diderick, Mosely, and Matthews to write you a letter (I believe likewise a Memorial to the Pope) against the appointment of a Bishop. I hear that this has displeased many of those absent from the meeting, and that it is not certain, whether the measure is to be carried into execution. Mr. Diderick has shown me a copy of his intended letter to you, of his Memorial, and of a letter to Cardl. Borromeo. He has no other introduction to write to this worthy Cardinal than the information communicated to me by our common friend Plowden, of his great worth and friendly disposition to you. I made objections to some parts of his letters; and I cannot tell as I mentioned before whether they will be sent. It is matter of surprise to me that he was nominated to the commission of Three; he is truly a zealous, painstaking Clergyman; but not sufficiently prudent, and conversant in the world, or capable of conducting such a business with the circumspection necessary to be used by us towards our own Government, and the Congn. of the Propaganda.

My long letter must have tired you. But it has been so earnestly recommended to me to give you very minute intelligence, that I have ventured to trespass on your patience. I have two things more to request: 1st. that you would please to present us all, and myself in particular, to Cardl. Borromeo, as penetrated with a lively sense of his virtue, and earnestly suing for his good offices to the service of Religion in this Country, wherever they can be usefully employed. 2-ly. that you would let Mr. Thayer know (for I hear from Plowden that he is at Paris, and corresponds with you) that I shall be happy in being favoured with an epistolary intercourse with him: and in confidence of your introduction, I shall probably write to him before I have your answer.

The little leisure I have lately had, has been taken up in writing and publishing an answer to Wharton's pamphlet, which was held up as unanswerable by our adversaries, whom the elegance of his language, and their ignorance in Religious controversy equally contributed to deceive. I have desired Mr. Talbot to transmit you a copy by the first opportunity. I doubt, I have not made my court to a certain party at Rome by my note on the destruction of the Society. Be pleased to charge with us all postage and other expences on our acct. A credit shall be placed in England for discharging them.

*With perfect esteem,*

*I have the honour to be, Dr Sir,*

*etc. etc.*

*Mr. Thorpe.<sup>10</sup>*

The ease with which the French intrigue had progressed became clearer to Father Carroll through his correspondence with Father Plowden. On September 21, 1784, Father Plowden wrote a complete *exposé* of the whole project, and his letter contained the following important message:

Although I know you to be incapable of mistaking the right line of conduct upon this occasion, yet I think it the part of a friend to send you whatever information I can obtain. My meaning is not to advise or instruct you, but only to enlarge your prospect. I must repeat that there are certainly some oblique views, most probably directed to the property of the American mission, and to the obtaining superiority over the missionaries. The note delivered to the nuncio proves their wishes to exclude every Jesuit from trust or honor, and equally betrays the policy of the French ministry, who, by bringing forward a Frenchman, or perhaps an

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, Case 9A-F1. Copies of *Letter and Relation* (in Maréchal's handwriting?) are in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives, Letter-Books*, vol. i, no. 2; vol. ii, nos. 1 and 2.



Irish-Frenchman, would use religion as an instrument to increase their own influence in America. Our friend Thorpe's memorial, delivered to the Pope, along with your petition, by Cardinal Borromeo, convinced the propaganda that the introduction of an alien would overthrow the mission. I wish you may quickly be turned into an ordinary from a bishop *in partibus*, and am persuaded the pope could not refuse you the powers, &c., if your election by your own clergy were abetted by your provincial assembly. We wish you to be as free as the bishop of Quebec, or the new archbishop of Mohilow. I wish to know in what light the leading men in the states consider your appointment. If they are disposed to tolerate it, surely they would be more willing to admit a bishop only dependent on the Holy See, than one who must be subject to the prefect and secretary of a congregation. If they can be brought to relish such a prelate, it is but one step more: you want not talents or spirit to take it, and all difficulties are at once removed. The business has been hitherto treated at Paris, with uncommon secrecy by the nuncio,

Mr. Thayer, who lives in Navarre college, wrote lately thus, to our friend Thorpe:

"With respect to the views of Rome upon America, all that I can tell you is that there is a treaty on foot to establish a vicar-apostolic for the thirteen states, which treaty, I suppose, is near conclusion. I know not what the Americans will think of this plan, whether they would fear a too great dependence on Rome. This I know, that any English priests whom I have the honor to know here, think that apostolic vicars are the ruin of Catholicity in England, and that bishops properly established would be the fit instruments of building a solid edifice, both there and in America." Make your own comments, my dear friend, on this extract, substitute a less violent word to ruin, and we shall easily agree with the writer. He is noticed by the archbishop of Paris and other dignified clergymen of the greatest merit, and much commended by the superior of Navarre college, in whose house he lives gratis. He appears to be sincere, and zealous for the promotion of religion in America, and we hope he will not be misled, &c.

If your friends here were better informed of your concerns, they might occasionally yield you service. Upon the first rumor that a vicar-apostolic was to be appointed, I prevailed upon Mr. Hoskins to write to Dr. Franklin to expose to him the degree of respect and consideration due to the missionaries now in America, and to desire that no proposals might be admitted without the participation and consent of you in particular, of the other missionaries, and the principal Catholic gentry in the country. At Mr. Thorpe's desire, the same has been written to him by Messrs. N. Sewell and Mattingly, with other information relative to the origin and actual state of the American missions. Mr. Thorpe is all alive in your service; and wishes that his endeavors may be useful to the common cause, and approved by you. The Romans have got scent of your promotion, and according to their custom have strangely distorted the whole business, even your name. They bring in the French king to figure in it,



and talk of Congress and your provincial assemblies as if they were so many conseils souverains in France.<sup>11</sup>

This letter probably reached Father Carroll about the time of the *Memorial* of December, 1784. To this situation abroad was added the danger of dissension at home. The "famous triumvirate," as Father Molyneux called the anti-episcopal Committee, was apparently not in favour of Carroll. No doubt other factors of which we are nowadays unaware entered into his final decision to accept the prefectship. "Since the prefecture," writes O'Gorman, "was expected to pave the way to some more satisfactory and permanent arrangement, and since, on the other hand, his refusal might result in the imposition of a foreigner as Prefect on the Catholics in America, Carroll yielded to the arguments of his fellow-priests and decided to take up the onerous office."<sup>12</sup>

Father Carroll's acceptance of the prefectship is contained in his *Letter* to Cardinal Antonelli, dated February 27, 1785. The rough draft of this *Letter* is in the Baltimore Cathedral Archives; an imperfect copy is among the *Shea Transcripts* at Georgetown University. The original, given here, is from a photostat copy: from the Propaganda Archives:

*Eminentissime Domine*

Litterae, quas ad me destinare dignata est Ema Vestra, diebus 9<sup>a</sup> et 16<sup>a</sup> anni praeteriti, in manus meas non pervenerunt ante diem 26 Novembris. Varia autem documenta litteras comitabantur. 1<sup>o</sup> Decretum Sacrae Congregationis de Propagandâ fide quâ me Superiorem missionum in tredecim Confoederatae Americae provinciis ad suum beneplacitum declaravit. 2<sup>o</sup> Benignissima suae Sanctitatis concessio et extensio universalis Jubilaei ad omnes Fideles in tredecim Confoederatae Americae provinciis. 3<sup>o</sup> Altera ejusdem concessio quâ mihi facultas tribuitur adminstrandî Sacramentum Confirmationis ad normam Instructionis, quam una recepi. 4<sup>o</sup> demum, facultates a S<sup>smo</sup> D.N. mihi concessae et Sociis in hac Domini vineâ laborantibus communicabiles.

Quod litteris, quibus haec ad me transmisisti documenta, Eminentissime Cardinalis, tantam erga me benevolentiam, tantum rei Catholicae in remotis hisce orbis partibus adjuvandae studium significaveris, gratias habeo et ago maximas, cujus quidem grati animi sensus certiore te prius fecissem, nisi longa imprimis a domo absentia, postea autem intempestiva navigantibus glacies scribendi occasionem denegasset. Deinde rogo te, ac humillime precor, ut Sanctitatis suae pedibus me sistere, ac devotissi-

<sup>11</sup> *United States Catholic Miscellany*, vol. iii, pp. 376-377.

<sup>12</sup> *History of the Catholic Church in the United States*, p. 267. New York, 1907.

num erga Sedem Apostolicam obsequium testificari velis; gratiasque referre, quod tam gravi munere me indignum non existimaverit.

Hi sunt animi sensus, quibus erga Bmum Patrem, teque adeo, Cardinalis Eminentissime, affectus fui, ubi propensam utriusque in me benevolentiam, et sollicitam pro Sanctâ nostrâ Religione in his regionibus providentiam intelligerem. Fuere tamen aliaque, quae tum initio, tum deinceps, cogitanti mihi, magnum timorem, magnam etiam moestitiam incutiebant. Videbam imprimis illud mihi munus committi, cui subeundo, ut sincere et ex intimo sensu profiteor, imparem me omnino esse sentio, nec illis animi aut corporis viribus praeditum, quibus instructum esse oportet, quicumque se ad illud fideliter administrandum accinxerit. Deinde ut Eminae Tae votis obsequeretur accuratam de rebus nostris relationem desiderantis, aliqua mihi commemoranda esse non ignorabam, quae minus grata fortasse essent futura, imo quae suspicionem commovere possent minus propensae in Sedem Apostolicam observantiae. Haec tamen omnia veritati postponam, et sinceræ rerum nostrarum expositioni. Scio enim, Em. Card.lis, nihil tuto aut efficaciter circa nos agi posse, nisi quae sit nostra conditio, plane intelligatur.

Imprimis igitur, ex tredecim provinciis, quae olim Regi Magnae Britanniae parebant, duae tantum fuere, Pensilvaniâ et Marilandiâ, in quibus permissum erat Catholicis tuto degere. In his etiam lege cautum erat, ne officio civili, militari, aut alio quovis frui possent. Excusso autem jugo Brittanico, novisque conditis legibus, in omnibus provinciis, Catholici sine molestiâ vivere et sacra peragere possunt. In plerisque tamen locis ad Reipublicae munera capessenda non admittuntur, nisi qui omnem jurisdictionem exteram, sive civilem, sive ecclesiasticam abrenuntiaverint. Ita fit, ut in plerisque his provinciis, seu Statibus, ut nunc vocant, nostri homines maneant a Republicâ exclusi: In quatuor tantum, nempe in Pensilvaniâ, Delawariâ, Marilandiâ, et Virginiâ, eodem ac coeteri cives jure utuntur. Haec autem beneficia, sive tolerantiae, sive communis, quamdiu simus habituri, non ausim pronunciare. Timent e nostris multi, in Marilandiâ praecipue, A catholicis in animo esse, ut omnino a gerendis muneribus excludamur: ego autem cui satis semper fuit mala non animo praevenire, sed, ubi advenerint, utrumque tolerare, spe foveor tantam nobis injuriam haud esse inferendam: imo vero confido tam firma Religionis fundamenta in his Americanis Statibus jaci posse, ut florentissima Ecclesiae portio, cum magno Sedis Apostolicae solatio, hic aliquando sit futura. Hoc autem loco illa mihi commemoranda sunt, de quibus dixi superius scitu necessaria, ut recte res nostrae Ecclesiasticae possint administrari.

Viguit autem in his regionibus praecipue secta Anglicana; rerum sacram apud illos ministri penedebant omnes a Pseudo-Episopo Londinensi: ad illum transfretabant, quotquot ordinari secundum sectae suae rationem cupiebant. Peracto autem bello, obtineri non potuit a sectae illius ministris, quamvis essent omnium frequentissimi, ut ab Episcopo Anglo, imo ab extero quovis penderent. Concessum est illis potius, ut Episcopos sibi constituerent et eligerent, quod jam ab ipsis factum est, quamvis nullum adhuc suo ritu consecratum habeant: Religionis suae administrandae sibi formam prae-

scripserunt; religionem suam dici et haberi *nationalem* cupiunt, eo quod jam nullum alibi superiorem admittant: denique ita machinantur ut ab illis timor ille incutatur, quo nostrorum nonnullus percuti dicebam.

Eminentissimus Cardinalis persuasum sibi habeat nobis gravissima omnia tolerabiliora fore, quam divinam illam Sedis Apostolicae auctoritatem abrenunciare: nec tantum Sacerdotes, qui hic sumus, sed etiam populum Catholicum in fide ita videri stabilem, ut nunquam a debitâ Summo Pontifici obedientiâ sit dimovendus. Idem tamen ille populus aliquam a B<sup>mo</sup> Patre gratiam sibi concedi, imo deberi existimat, necessariam sane sive ad juris communis quo nunc utitur conservationem, sive ad propulsandum periculum, quod timetur. Ex iis quae dixi, et ex rerum publicarum, quae hic sunt, constitutione, Eminae Tuae ignotum esse non potest, quam invidiosa illis sit omnis externa jurisdictio. Hoc igitur a Catholicis desideratur, ut nulla detur ansa Religionis nostrae adversariis nos criminandi, quasi plus aequo a regimine externo pendeamus; et ut aliqua ratio ineatur quâ in posterum Superior Ecclesiasticus huic regioni destinari possit, ita ut Spiritualis Sae Sedis jurisdictio omnino servetur; et simul tollatur omnis occasio nobis objiciendi, quasi aliquid admittamus patriae Independentiae inimicum. Hoc ex praecipuis Catholicis multi, communi scripto, Sanctitati suae significare cogitabant, ac ii maxime, qui vel in generali Americae Concilio (Congressum vocant) sedem obtinuerunt, vel in Pensylvaniâ ac Marilandîâ conciliis legislativis cum auctoritate intersunt; a quibus tamen obtinui, ut in praesens ejusmodi scriptum differatur. Quid hâc in re statui possit, Beatissimus Pater plenius forsân intelliget, ubi animum advertet ad sextum articulum *unionis perpetuae* inter Status foederatae Americae; quo sancitur, *nemini licitum fore, qui munere quovis fungatur sub Unitis Statibus, donum aliquod, officium aut titulum cujusvis generis accipere a Rege aliquo, Principe aut domino extero.* Quae prohibitio, etsi ad illos tantum pertinere videatur, qui ad munera Reipublicae destinantur, ab adversariis tamen nostris etiam ad officia Ecclesiastica fortasse detorquebitur. Cupimus igitur, Em<sup>se</sup> Cardinalis, omni modo providere, ut fidei integritas, et debita erga Sedem Apostolicam observantia, et unio semper vigeat: at simul ut Catholicis Americanis pro Ecclesiastico regimine concedatur, quidquid salvâ Religione concedi potest. Ita minui sectariorum invidiam plenam suspicionis, ita res nostras stabiliri posse confidimus.

Significasti, Em<sup>e</sup> Card.<sup>lis</sup>, Sanctitatis suae mentem esse et consilium, ut Vicarium Apostolicum Episcopali caractere et titulo insignitum pro his provinciis decernat. Ut paterna haec pro nobis sollicitudo magnâ nos lætitia affecit, ita etiam aliquem initio incussit timorem. Sciebamus enim A catholicis Americanis olim persuaderi nunquam potuisse, ut vel suae sectae Episcopum admitterent, cum id tentaretur, dum Angliae Regi hae provinciae subessent: unde etiam timor nascebatur, ne nobis quidem id permissum iri. At jam, ab aliquot mensibus, conventionem factâ, Ministrorum Protestantium Ecclesiae Anglicanae, seu Episcopalis, ut nunc vocant, decreverunt se, quod ex legum auctoritate pleno suae Religionis exercitio gaudeant, eo ipso jus habere ad tales rerum Sacrarum Ministros sibi constituendos, quales sectae suae ratio et disciplina exigit, Episcopos scilicet,

Presbyteros et Diaconos; cui illorum decreto non repugnaverunt, qui concedendis legibus, apud nos sunt designati. Cum igitur nobis eadem pro Religionis exercitio libertas concedatur, jus quoque idem, quantum ad leges nostras municipales spectat, competere necesse est.

Re autem se habente, judicabit Beatissimus Pater, tuque adeo, Em<sup>e</sup> Cardis, animo perpendes, an tempus constituendo Episcopo opportunum nunc sit, qualis is esse debeat, et quomodo designandus: de quibus omnibus, non tamquam iudicium meum interpositurus, sed plenior relationem facturum aliqua commemorabo. Imprimis de opportunitate temporis observari potest, nullam jam animorum fore commotionem, si Episcopus designetur, quod Acatolici Protestantes sibi aliquem constituere cogitent: deinde ut aliquam suae sectae apud vulgus existimationem ex Episcopali dignitate conciliare sperant, ita etiam non solum similem nobis, sed etiam ingentia commoda obventura confidimus, cum hanc Ecclesiam eo modo administrari contigerit, quo Christus Dominus instituit. Ex altera tamen parte occurrit, quod cum jam Sm<sup>us</sup> Pater aliter Sacramento Confirmationis conferendo providere dignatus sit, non prius Episcopum nobis constituere necessitas postulet, quam idonei aliqui reperiantur ad Sacros Ordines suscipiendos, quod paucis annis futurum speramus, ut intelliget Eminensus. Cardinalis ex iis, quae separatim relatione distinctâ scribere cogito. Quod tempus ubi advenerit, commodius fortasse pro decenti Episcopi sustentatione providere, quam nunc pro rerumstrarum tenuitate poterimus.

Deinde, si Episcopum nobis assignare Sanctitati suae visum fuerit, praestabitne Vicarium Apostolicum, an Ordinarium cum propria Sede constituere? Quis rei Catholicae incremento, quis amovendae Catholicorum invidiae, terrorique illi de exterâ jurisdictione magis inserviret? quem terrorem auctum iri certissime scio, si Superiorem Ecclesiasticum ita designari noverint, ut ad arbitrium Sacrae Congregationis de propagandâ fide, aut cujusvis alterius tribunalis externi ab officio possit dimoveri: nec fas illi sit Sacerdotem quemvis ad sacras functiones admittere, quem illa Congregatio non approbaverit, et ad nos destinaverit.

De modo autem Episcopum designandi nihil aliud nunc dicam, quam inplorare nos, pro Sedis Apostolicae iudicio dirigendo divinam sapientiam et misericordiam; ut, si minime concedendum videatur Sacerdotibus in hac Domini vineâ tot annos laborantibus illum suae Sanctitati proponere, quem ipsi magis idoneum existimaverint, conveniatur tamen de aliquâ Episcopum nominandi viâ, quâ Nostratum, tam Catholicorum, quam Sectariorum offensio possit averti.

De Duobus juvenibus ad Urbanum Collegium mittendis nihil agere licuit, donec plenius de Em<sup>ae</sup> tuae mente intellexero. Si itineris impensis impares fuerint, video quidem a Sacra Congregatione de viatico provisum iri: non tamen habeo compertum, cui demandatum sit illas impensas subministrari. Navium enim magistri in navem vectores recipere non solent, nisi naulum ante navigationem solvatur, aut certo sciant, a quo repetendum sit. Deinde, ut quae dixi de Episcopo vel Superiore designando, aliquam forte mutationem suggerent circa modum res nostras Ecclesiasticas administrandi, ita quoque consilium de educandis in isto Collegio Juvenibus poterit mutari,



quod tamen minime futurum confidimus. Postremo, convenerit, ut Juvenum parentes doceantur, an Juramentum aliquod et cujusmodi ab eorum filiis exigendum sit, antequam in patriam remittantur: omnis enim cautela adhibenda est, ut, quantum fieri potest, videantur Catholici, tam populus quam ministri, in rebus tantum omnino necessariis ab exterâ potestate pendere.

Interim, dum responsum expecto, dabo operam, ut Juvenes duo summâ curâ seligantur, quales tuæ litterae, Emin: Cardlis, exigunt: spero insuper me effecturum, ut itineris impensae, saltem hinc usque in Galliam a parentibus solvantur: sin minus id obtinero, omnem in illis impensis moderationem adhiberi curabo. Intelligo autem pro unoquoque juvene navigationis et alios necessariis sumptus, donec portum attigerit, summam septuaginta vel octoginta aureorum circiter confecturos.

Reliqua, de quibus instrui voluisti, Eme Cardlis, pro religiosâ tuâ erga nos sollicitudine, opportunius separato scripto extra formam litterarum exhiberi posse existimavi; illud tamen hic iterum atque iterum obsecro, ut eam in facultatibus mihi concessis restrictionem tolli omni modo cures, quâ aliorum Sacerdotum operâ uti prohibeor, prater illos quos sacra Congregatio destinaverit et approbaverit. Id enim nisi concedatur, brevi spatio magna Catholicorum pars omnino Sacramentorum expers erit, et Religionis ministeriis destituta. Unica enim, quae nobis superest spes supplementi cujusdam cito recipiendi pro Sociis extinctis, aut jam ad extremum senium vergentibus, posita est in illis Sacerdotibus, qui hic nati, ante bellum exortum in Europam educationis causâ profecti sunt, ibique sacros Ordines susceperunt. Audio horum aliquos in patriam reditum cogitare: quibus tamen, si advenierint, in otio erit manendum, utcumque moribus et doctrinâ comparatis ad hanc Domini vineam excolendam. Itaque, omni quidem reverentiâ, sed simul summâ fiduciâ, et ex plenâ persuasione id è Religionis fore, rogo, Emin: Cardinalis, ut tuum apud Sanctitatem suam studium interponas, illique significes, Superiori in his Foederatae Americae Statibus omnino necesse esse, ut quos Sacerdotes dignos judicaverit, hos in laborum Societatem possit ascire.

Haec habui, Eme Cardlis, quae liberè fideliterque scriberem de rebus ad Religionem spectantibus, quibus veluti supplementum et ad tua quaesita responsum accedent, quae altero scripto commemorata reperies. Mihi jam sit permissum hanc gregis Domini portionem, pastoresque, qui in illo sunt, meo ipsum singulari tuae pietati, paternaeque benevolentiae commendare; precarique ut oculos conjicias in immensas illas regiones, quae foederatae Americae finibus continentur: in diesque magis ac magis immigrantium accessionibus, et ex naturali foecunditate, incolentium numero augentur. Ubique liberè praedicari poterit vera fides, nec quidquam obstare videtur, quo minus magni ex hâc libertate fructus decerpantur, praeter operariorum defectum, mediaque illis providendi. Ad te igitur, qui singulari curâ, studio et auctoritate Religionis propagationi invigilas, recurrimus, ut quae ad hunc finem meditamus, pro tuâ sapientiâ adjuvare velis, hancque regionem veluti tuae providentiae et fidei commissam intueri. Quod ad me spectat, ego summâ fiduciâ, Eminentissime Cardinalis, in hujus Ecclesiae negotiis



tua consilia, tuam auctoritatem, pietatem tuam implorabo, precaborque Deum omnipotentem, ut pro animarum salute, divinaeque fidei extensione te saluum et incolumem diu esse velit. Ita vovet

*Eminentissime Cardinalis*

*Eminae Tuae*

*Servus Obsequentissimus*

JOANNES CARROLL.

*Ex Marilandia, die 27<sup>a</sup>*

*Februarii, 1785.*

*Eminentissimo Cardli Antonello.*<sup>13</sup>

The importance of this *Letter* can hardly be exaggerated. It is the first document of its kind which passed between the Church in the United States and the Holy See, and it contains for the Church historian of the new Republic the most valuable synthesis of the state of religion in this country which we possess for the Revolutionary period. After apologizing for the delay in answering Antonelli's letter, which was received three months before, Carroll thanked the Holy See for the confidence placed in him, and expressed the doubt whether he possessed the mental and physical qualities necessary for the faithful performance of his duties as prefect-apostolic. In replying to the request of the Sacred Congregation for an accurate statement regarding the condition of the Church in the new Republic, he realized that he might have to say things which might be misinterpreted at Rome, but he thought it best to speak out frankly because otherwise the reorganization of the Church here would not be begun safely and efficiently. Maryland and Pennsylvania alone gave an adequate freedom to the faithful; but even in these States full civic liberty had not been conferred upon the Catholics. However, since the achievement of independence, Catholics were permitted to assemble for divine worship in every place in the Union.

But how long we are to enjoy the benefits of this toleration or equal rights, I would not dare to assert. Many of our people especially in Maryland fear, that we shall be absolutely excluded from holding office; for my own part, I have deemed it wiser not to anticipate evils, but to bear them when they come. I cherish the hope that so great a wrong will not be done us; nay more, I trust that the foundations of religion will be so firmly laid in the United States, that a most flourishing part of the Church will in time be developed here, to the great consolation of the Holy See. The Church of England had been the dominant body here,

<sup>13</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives, Case 9A-F2; Propaganda Archives, Scrittura riferite, America Centrale, vol. ii, ff. 306-311.*

directed by ministers dependent on the pseudo-Bishop of London, whither those who desired to enter their ministry went for ordination, but after the war, they were not allowed to depend on an English or any other foreign bishop. They were free to appoint and elect bishops of their own, as they had in fact done, although none had yet been consecrated according to their rites. They have adopted a form of government for their church and desire it be called and to be *national*, in that it admitted no foreign Superior, that they may be freed from such fear for the future as many Catholics felt. The Most Eminent Cardinal may rest assured that the greatest evils would be borne by us rather than renounce the divine authority of the Holy See; that not only we priests who are here, but the Catholic people seem so firm in the faith that they will never withdraw from obedience to the Sovereign Pontiff. The Catholic body, however, think that some favor should be granted to them by the Holy Father, necessary for their permanent enjoyment of the civil rights which they now enjoy, and to avert the dangers which they fear. From what I have said, and from the framework of public affairs here, your Eminence must see how objectionable all foreign jurisdiction will be to them. The Catholics therefore desire that no pretext be given to the enemies of our religion to accuse us of depending unnecessarily on a foreign authority; and that some plan may be adopted for this country, in such a way as to retain absolutely the spiritual jurisdiction of the Holy See, and at the same time remove all ground for objecting to us, as though we held anything hostile to the national independence. Many of the leading Catholics thought of laying this before his Holiness in a general Memorial, especially those who have been either in the Continental Congress or the legislature of Pennsylvania and Maryland; but I induced them to refrain from any such step at least for the present. The Holy Father will perhaps see more clearly what is to be done in this matter, if he considers the Sixth of the Articles of Perpetual Confederation between the States, which enacts that *no one who holds any office under the United States, shall be allowed to receive any gift, office or title of any kind whatsoever from any king, prince or foreign government*, and though this prohibition seems to extend only to those who are appointed to offices in the republic, it will perhaps be wrested by our opponents to apply also to ecclesiastical offices. We desire therefore, Most Eminent Cardinal, to provide in every way, that the faith in its integrity, due obedience towards the Apostolic See and perfect union should flourish, and at the same time that whatever can with safety to religion be granted, shall be conceded to American Catholics in ecclesiastical government; in this way we hope that the distrust of Protestants now full of suspicion will be diminished, and that thus our affairs can be solidly established.

You have indicated, Most Eminent Cardinal, that it was the intention and design of His Holiness to appoint a Vicar-Apostolic for these States, invested with the episcopal character and title. While this paternal solicitude for us has filled us with great joy, it also at first inspired some fear: for we knew that heretofore American Protestants never could be induced

to allow even a Bishop of their own sect, when the attempt was made during the subjection of these provinces to the King of England: hence a fear arose that we would not be permitted to have one. But some months since in a convention of Protestant ministers of the Anglican or as it is here called the Episcopal Church, they decreed, that as by authority of law they enjoyed the full exercise of their religion, they therefore had the right of appointing for themselves, such ministers of holy things, as the system of and discipline of their sect required; namely bishops, priests, and deacons; this decision on their part was not censured by the Congress appointed to frame our laws. As the same liberty in the exercise of religion is granted to us, it necessarily follows that we enjoy the same right in regard to adopting laws for our government.

While the matter stands thus, the Holy Father will decide and you, Most Eminent Cardinal, will consider whether the time is now opportune for appointing a bishop, what his qualifications should be, and how he should be nominated. On all these points, not as if seeking to obtain my own judgment but to make this relation more simple, I shall note a few facts. First, as regards the seasonableness of the step, it may be noted, that there will be no excitement in the public mind, if a bishop be appointed, as Protestants think of appointing one for themselves: nay, they even hope to acquire some importance for their sect among the people from the episcopal dignity; so too we trust that we shall not only acquire the same, but that great advantages will follow; inasmuch as this church will then be governed in that manner which Christ our Lord instituted. On the other hand, however, it occurs that as the Most Holy Father has already deigned to provide otherwise for conferring the sacrament of confirmation, there is no actual need for the appointment of a bishop, until some candidates are found fitted to receive holy orders; this we hope will be the case in a few years, as you will understand, Most Eminent Cardinal, from a special relation which I purpose writing. When that time comes, we shall perhaps be better able to make a suitable provision for a bishop, than from our slender resources we can now do.

In the next place, if it shall seem best to his Holiness to assign a bishop to this country, will it be best to appoint a Vicar-Apostolic or an ordinary with a See of his own? Which will conduce more to the progress of Catholicity, which will contribute most to remove Protestant jealousy of foreign jurisdiction? I know with certainty that this fear will increase, if they know that an ecclesiastical superior is so appointed as to be removable from office at the pleasure of the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide, or any other tribunal out of the country, or that he has no power to admit any priest to exercise the sacred function, unless that Congregation has approved and sent him to us.

As to the method of nominating a bishop, I will say no more, at present, than this, that we are imploring God in his wisdom and mercy to guide the judgment of the Holy See, that if it does not seem proper to allow the priests who have laboured for so many years in this vineyard of the Lord to propose to the Holy See, the one whom they deem the most

fit, that some method will be adopted by which a bad feeling may not be excited among the people of this country, Catholic and Protestant.<sup>14</sup>

Father Carroll then took up the matter of sending two boys to Rome, to occupy the American scholarships granted by Propaganda, and pointed out, as he was well able to do from a long personal experience in Europe, that the question of the Student Oath would have to be settled in a way that would be acceptable to the American mind before they could be sent. He urged the reconsideration of the limitation placed upon his jurisdiction in the case where he might want to employ priests entering the country. Some American priests, who were then abroad, would undoubtedly return, and it would be a grave detriment to religion if the Church had to wait for Rome's permission for the exercise of their ministry. After recommending the American Church most earnestly to His Eminence, he begged him to cast his eyes on the immense territory contained within the limits of the United States, and to realize how quickly, through immigration, the population of the land would grow. He appealed, therefore, for special interest and consideration for the American Catholics and assured the Cardinal-Prefect that all were loyal and devoted children of the Church.

In several of the official letters from Propaganda a request was made for certain definite information regarding the state of the Church in the new Republic. This information was asked, as we have seen, through the Nuncio at Paris, on May 12, 1784, in a letter addressed by Cardinal Antonelli to the Chevalier de la Luzerne, French Minister Plenipotentiary, at New York. Cardinal Antonelli's letter to Father Carroll, June 9, 1784, contained the same request. This information Father Carroll obtained by correspondence with his fellow-priests between November, 1784, and March 1, 1785. He embodied this information in his *Relation of the State of Religion in the United States*. The original is here printed in full from a photostat copy from the Propaganda Archives.<sup>15</sup> As the first *Relation* of its kind to be sent to Rome from the United States, it is among the most treasured first-hand sources for the history of the Church in our country:

<sup>14</sup> The translation given is from Shea, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 251-256.

<sup>15</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, ff. 312-314. The rough draft is in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9A-F1.



*Relatio pro Emo. Cardinali Antonello de statu Religionis in Unitis Foederatae Americae provinciis.*

1° De numero Catholicorum in Foederatae Americae Provinciis.

Sunt in *Marilandîâ* circiter 15,800. Ex his sunt novem mille homines liberi aetatis adultae, aut supra annum duodecimum; pueri minoris aetatis fere ter mille, totidemq. omnis aetatis servi (Nigros vocant a colore) ex Africâ oriundi. In *Pensilvaniâ* sunt ad minimum *septem mille*, inter quos paucissimi Africanî, vivuntq. Catholici collecti magis ac sibi invicem contigui. In *Virginia* sunt non amplius *ducenti*, quibus quater aut quinquies per annum adest Sacerdos: Dicuntur plurimi alii, tam in illâ, quam in coeteris provinciis sparsim vivere, omni Religionis ministerio destituti. In provinciâ *Novum Eboracum* dictâ, audio *esse mille quingentos ad minimum*, qui nuper communibus sumptibus ex *Hiberniâ* accersiverunt virum Religiosum Ordinis Si. Francisci; diciturq. optimis de moribus et doctrinâ documentis instructus esse: advenerat paulo prius, quam litteras accepissem, quibus facultates Sociis communicabiles ad me sunt delatae. Dubitavi aliquando, an jure possem hunc pro Sacramentorum administratione approbare. Et jam statui, appropinquante maxime festo Paschali, ipsum pro Socio habere, facultatesq. necessarias impertiri, quod meum consilium approbatum iri confido. Nihil certi dicere licet de numero Catholicorum, qui sunt in locis conterminis fluvio dicto *Mississippi*, omnique illi regioni, quae secundum illum fluvium ad Oceanum Atlanticum pertingit, et ab eodem usque ad limites Carolinae, Virginiae, et Pensilvaniae extenditur. Hic tractus continet, ut audio, multos Catholicos, olim Canadenses, qui linguâ Gallicâ utuntur, quos rerum sacrarum Ministris destitutos esse valde metuo. Transivit ad illos nuper Sacerdos quidam Germanus, sed ex Galliâ ultimo profectus, qui ex ordine Carmelitarum se esse profitetur: nullo tamen sufficiente testimonio muniebatur, missum se esse a legitimo Superiore. Quid agat, et quo statu ibi sint res Catholicae, edoctum me iri propediem expecto. Episcopi *Quebecensis* jurisdictio in aliquam regionis illius partem olim pertinuit: an nunc autem, cum omnes in foederatae Americae ditionem cesserint, potestatem ullam exercere velit, haud equidem scio.

2° Catholicorum conditione, pietate, abusibus, &c.

In *Marilandîâ*, paucae ex praecipuis et ditioribus familiis, a primis provinciae fundamentis, fidem Catholicam a progenitoribus huc invectam adhuc profitentur: major autem pars sunt agricolae, et in *Pensilvaniâ* fere omnes, exceptis mercatoribus et opificibus, qui *Philadelphiae* degunt. Quod ad pietatem spectat, sunt, ut plurimum, in Religionis exercitiis et Sacramentorum frequentatione satis assidui: sed sine illo fervore, quem solet excitare continua ad sensa pietatis exhortatio: vix enim singulis mensibus, aut etiam bimestri spatio plurimae Congregationes rem divinam, et concionem sibi fieri audiunt: ita Sacerdotum inopiâ, multoq. magis, locorum intervallo, itinerisq. incommodis opprimimur: Haec de indigenis dicta sint: alia enim longe est ratio Catholicorum, qui magno numero ex variis Europae nationibus ad nos confluunt. Cum enim ex nostratibus pauci sint, qui non saepius per annum, praecipue autem tempore paschali ad Sacramenta Poenitentiae et Eucharistiae accedant; vix reperitur inter priores illos,



qui officium hoc Religionis exerceat; quorum exemplum in urbibus mercatorii maxime perniciosum fore timetur. Abusus inter Catholicos sunt illi maxime, qui ex necessariâ cum Aatholicis familiaritate, et exemplis inde collectis oriuntur; liberior nempe se tractandi ratio inter juniores personas diversi sexus, quam animi, aut forte etiam corporis integritas patiatur; nimis propensum studium ad saltationes, et id genus alia; et incredibilis aviditas (in puellis praecipue) legendi fabulas amatorias, quae magno numero ad nos advehuntur. Deinde in coeteris universim defectus diligentiae in educandis ad Religionem liberis, sed praecipue servis Africanis, totiusq; illius curae ad Sacerdotes transmissio; ex quo fit, ut cum sint continuo laboribus exerciti; raroq. et non nisi ad breve tempus cum Sacerdote esse possint, in fide rudes et in moribus turpissimi plerique esse soleant. Incredible est quantum animarum pastoribus molestiae et solitudinis facessant.

3° De numero Presbyterorum, studiis, et modo se sustendandi.

Sunt in *Marilandîâ* Presbyteri novemdecim: In *Pensilvaniâ* quinque. Ex his autem duo sunt supra, tres alii proximum ad septuagesimum annum accedunt; adeoq; omnino impares subeundis laboribus, sine quibus hac Domini vinea coli non potest. Inter reliquos Presbyteros, aliqui admodum infirmâ valetudine utuntur; et unus est nuper a me approbatus, ad paucos menses tantum, ut experimentum illius faciam in extrema operariorum necessitate. Aliqua enim de ipso narrabantur, quae vehementer me deterrebant ab illius opera adhibendâ. Ego quidem illi quantum possum, invigilabo; et si quid acciderit gravitate sacerdotali minus dignum, facultates concessas revocabo, quantumcunque incommodum multis Catholicis inde eventurum sit. Mihi enim persuasum est Catholicam fidem minus detrimenti passuram, si nulli Sacerdotes per breve tempus fuerint, quam si, ubi ita vivimus inter alterius Religionis homines, ad sacra ministeria assumuntur, non dicam mali, Sacerdotes, sed etiam imprudentes et incauti. Reliqui omnes Sacerdotes plenam laboris vitam agunt, quod unusquisque congregationibus longe dissitis obsequium praestet, adeoq; continuis, gravissimisque equitationibus, ad aegrotos praecipue, continuo fatigetur. Presbyteri sustentantur ut plurimum ex fundorum proventibus; alibi vero liberalitate Catholicorum. Nulla hic proprie sunt bona Ecclesiastica. Privatorum enim nomine possidentur ea bona, ex quibus aluntur Presbyteri; et testamentis transferuntur ad haeredes: ita faciendum suggessit dira necessitas, dum legibus Catholica Religio hic arctaretur; neque adhuc inventum est huic incommodo remedium, quamvis a nobis anno elapso id tentaretur.

Ad procurandos in Religionis ministerio successores, quid faciendum sit, non satis intelligimus. Est jam Philadelphiae collegium, agiturque de duobus in *Marilandîâ* extruendis, ad quae admitti poterunt Catholici aequae ac alii, tam Praesides, quam Professores et alumni. Fore speramus, ut hos inter aliqui vitam Ecclesiasticam velint amplecti. Cogitamus igitur de seminario instituendo, in quo valeant deinceps ad mores et doctrinam statui illi convenientes efformari.

Hâc factâ relatione, liceat nunc aliqua adjungere quae omnino necessaria judico ad spiritualem Catholicorum administrationem. Imprimis ex quoti-

diano commercio cum Aatholicis, oritur perpetuum discrimen ineundi cum illis contractus matrimonialis, ad quod periculum avertendum usus apud nos invaluerat dispensandi, quantum nobis permittebatur, inter consanguineos Catholicos. Ita non solum conservari Religionem, sed augeri ab experientiâ didicimus. Ut igitur Ssmus Pater facultates mihi benigne concessit, Sociis etiam communicabiles, *dispensandi in 3° mixto cum 2°, et inferioribus consanguinitatis et affinitatis gradibus*; ita humillime tam meo, quam Sociorum nomine precor, ut saltem ad Superiorem extendere velit facultates dispensandi *in 2° simplici*, tam consanguinitatis quam affinitatis. Si autem illud generaliter concedi nequit, quod propter locorum distantiam maxime optandum esset, *Pro triginta ad minimum vicibus* precor, ut ita dispensandi mihi detur facultas. Vehementer etiam a Sociis meis desideratur, ut possit hic *dispensari in primo gradu affinitatis* ortae ex copulâ illicitâ. Hos enim impedimentum saepe subsistit inter Africanos praecipue, ante matrimonium attentatum; nec tamen nisi longum post tempus, multorumq. annorum cohabitationem Sacerdos impedimentum, fortuito plerumq. deprehendit.

Video praeterea dispensationem celebrandi missam post meridiem, *ad unam tantum horam* extendi; cum tamen aliquando confessiones expediri non possint *ante tres horas*, quod mihi certe saepe contigit a primâ aurorâ illud ministerium auspicanti; credebamq. in ejusmodi casibus legem charitatis validiorem esse, quam ut Sacramentorum expertes domum remitterentur, qui magno labore et incommodo, viginti, triginta aut amplius mille passus venerant, et saepe in his mulieres gravidae et partui proximae.

Si quae alia occurrant, de quibus intellexero gratum fore, ut ad Emum Cardinalem relatio fiat, plene scribam.

Die 1<sup>a</sup> Martii 1785.

JOANNES CARROLL.

Shea has given us the following translation of this document, no doubt from another copy, as can be seen by the minor variations:

1. *On the Number of Catholics in the United States.*

There are in Maryland about 15,800 Catholics; of these there are about 9,000 freemen, adults or over twelve years of age; children under that age, about 3,000; and about that number of slaves of all ages of African origin, called negroes. There are in Pennsylvania about 7,000, very few of whom are negroes, and the Catholics are less scattered and live nearer to each other. There are not more than 200 in Virginia who are visited four or five times a year by a priest. Many other Catholics are said to be scattered in that and other states, who are utterly deprived of all religious ministry. In the State of New York I hear there are at least 1,500. (Would that some spiritual succor could be afforded them!) They have recently, at their own expense, sent for a Franciscan Father from Ireland, and he is said to have the best testimonials as to his learning and life; he had arrived a little before I received the letters in which

faculties were transmitted to me, communicable to my fellow-priests. I was for a time in doubt whether I could properly approve this priest for the administration of the sacraments. I have now, however, decided, especially as the feast of Easter is so near, to consider him as one of my fellow-priests, and to grant him faculties, and I trust that my decision will meet your approbation. As to the Catholics who are in the territory bordering on the river called Mississippi and in all that region which following that river extends to the Atlantic Ocean, and from it extends to the limits of Carolina, Virginia, and Pennsylvania—this tract of country contains, I hear, many Catholics, formerly Canadians, who speak French, and I fear that they are destitute of priests. Before I received your Eminence's letters there went to them a priest, German by birth, but who came last from France; he professes to belong to the Carmelite order; he was furnished with no sufficient testimonials that he was sent by his lawful superior. What he is doing and what is the condition of the Church in those parts, I expect soon to learn. The jurisdiction of the Bishop of Quebec formerly extended to some part of that region; but I do not know whether he wishes to exercise any authority there, now that all these parts are subjects to the United States.

2. *On the Condition, Piety, and Defects, etc., of Catholics:*

In Maryland a few of the leading more wealthy families still profess the Catholic faith introduced at the very foundation of the province by their ancestors. The greater part of them are planters and in Pennsylvania almost all are farmers, except the merchants and mechanics living in Philadelphia. As for piety, they are for the most part sufficiently assiduous in the exercises of religion and in frequenting the sacraments, but they lack that fervor, which frequent appeals to the sentiment of piety usually produce, as many congregations hear the word of God only once a month, and sometimes only once in two months. We are reduced to this by want of priests, by the distance of congregations from each other and by difficulty of travelling. This refers to Catholics born here, for the condition of the Catholics who in great numbers are flowing in here from different countries of Europe, is very different. For while there are few of our native Catholics who do not approach the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist, at least once a year, especially in Easter time, you can scarcely find any among the newcomers who discharge this duty to religion, and there is reason to fear that the example will be very pernicious especially in commercial towns. The abuses that have grown among Catholics are chiefly those, which result from unavoidable intercourse with non-Catholics, and the examples thence derived: namely more free intercourse between young people of opposite sexes than is compatible with chastity in mind and body; too great fondness for dances and similar amusements; and an incredible eagerness, especially in girls, for reading love stories which are brought over in great quantities from Europe. Then among other things, a general lack of care in instructing their children and especially the negro slaves in their religion, as these people are kept constantly at work, so that they rarely hear any instructions

from the priest, unless they can spend a short time with one; and most of them are consequently very dull in faith and depraved in morals. It can scarcely be believed how much trouble and care they give the pastors of souls.

3. *On the number of the priests, their qualifications, character and means of support.*

There are nineteen priests in Maryland and five in Pennsylvania. Of these two are more than seventy years old, and three others very near that age: and they are consequently almost entirely unfit to undergo the hardships, without which this Vineyard of the Lord cannot be cultivated. Of the remaining priests, some are in very bad health, and there is one recently approved by me for a few months only, that in the extreme want of priests I may give him a trial; for some doings were reported of him which made me averse to employing him. I will watch him carefully, and if anything occurs unworthy of priestly gravity I will recall the faculties granted, whatever inconvenience this may bring to many Catholics: for I am convinced that the Catholic faith will suffer less harm, if for a short time there is no priest at a place, than if living as we do among fellow-citizens of another religion, we admit to the discharge of the sacred ministry, I do not say bad priests, but incautious and imprudent priests. All the other clergymen lead a life full of labour, as each one attends congregations far apart, and has to be riding constantly and with great fatigue, especially to sick calls. Priests are maintained chiefly from the proceeds of the estates; elsewhere by the liberality of the Catholics. There is properly no ecclesiastical property here: for the property by which the priests are supported, is held in the names of individuals and transferred by will to devisees. This course was rendered necessary when the Catholic religion was cramped here by laws, and no remedy has yet been found for this difficulty, although we made an earnest effort last year. There is a college in Philadelphia, and it is proposed to establish two in Maryland, in which Catholics can be admitted, as well as others, as presidents, professors and pupils. We hope that some educated there will embrace the ecclesiastical state. We think accordingly of establishing a Seminary, in which they can be trained to the life and learning suited to that state.<sup>16</sup>

The two problems which clouded his immediate horizon were the "cramping clauses" which practically robbed him of all power, as can be seen in his letter to Father Thorpe, of February 17, 1785, given above, and the question of a bishopric for the United States.<sup>17</sup> The task before him and before the little

<sup>16</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 257-261. A postscript to this *Relation*, asking for some minor dispensations, shows how tightly his hands were tied.

<sup>17</sup> An interesting side-light on the problem of the bishopric is given in a letter from the French Chargé d'affaires, Barbé de Marbois, dated Philadelphia, March 27, 1785, to the Prime Minister, the Count de Vergennes. Marbois states that the Holy



band of workers he had in the American vineyard was immense, he told his friend, Father Plowden, in a letter dated June 29, 1785, and his inability to give faculties to new arrivals in the ministry was the most unfortunate part of his embarrassing situation. The presence of other priests in the country who carried on their ministrations without recognizing him as Superior also added to the delicate position he held. Fortunately, on receiving Carroll's letter of February 17, 1785, Father Thorpe immediately acted by having the doubt settled at Rome; and on July 2, 1785, and again on August 31, 1785, he informed the præfect-apostolic that a blunder had occurred and that the "cramping clauses" against which "you had with great reason remonstrated should be struck out of the printed faculties and . . . were never meant to be where you found them, left by an oversight in the Secretary's office."<sup>18</sup> As Carroll learned, the formula of his appointment was based on that of a Prefect-Apostolic sent from Rome with missionaries to Africa, and they quite naturally contained the clause that he was not to give faculties to any priest in his jurisdiction unless the same were sent of Propaganda. On July 23, 1785, Cardinal Antonelli wrote to Father Carroll, thanking him for the *Letter and Relation* of February-March, 1785, and approving his stand; and sending him a new formula of faculties, which allowed Carroll to receive priests into the country and to appoint them at will.<sup>19</sup> The second of these problems, namely, the appointment of a Superior with episcopal powers as well as jurisdiction, was not

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See could do nothing more gracious for the Catholics in the United States, if circumstances would permit, than to promote Father Carroll immediately to the episcopal dignity. "I am persuaded," he writes, "that nothing could give them a more general satisfaction." He pointed out that there were Catholics in the National Congress at that time, and that several influential members of the Maryland Assembly were members of the Faith. Naturally, as he suggested, care must be taken not to make it appear that the Bishop depended upon a foreign power in those matters in which the American government desired its people to be independent; and he hinted that it might be just as well if the Holy See lessened its assertive power over the spiritual side of things. The letter concludes with a statistical table of the Catholics in the various states. New England, 600; New York and the Jerseys, 1,700; Pennsylvania and Delaware, 7,700; Maryland, free, 12,000, slaves, 8,000; Southern states, about 2,500; the Illinois country, 12,000. Total, 44,500. The Italian version of this letter is in *Propaganda Archives, Scrittura Riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 316.

<sup>18</sup> Thorpe to Carroll, Rome, August 26, 1785, *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 6-J8.

<sup>19</sup> HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, p. 635.



settled until November 14, 1789, when Father John Carroll was appointed Bishop of Baltimore.

There was more than the perfunctory phrases of the man raised to a unique and important post in his *Letter* to Antonelli. The task before him was a delicate one; the field of his labours was, to use his own word, immense in extent and in possibilities. His jurisdiction, meagre as it was in its amplitude, was the only bond uniting the new Republic to the Holy See. He felt himself utterly incapable of bringing all the elements of Catholic life in the United States into strict conformity with canonical rule. The number of his priests was limited; many of them were old men, worn out with the fatigues and burdens of the harsh life the missionaries were forced to lead. The distances were many times greater in those days than now. Means of communication were slow and uncertain; and the very liberty which the new Republic had proclaimed to all the earth and the inhabitants thereof opened the way to adventurers ecclesiastic as it did to adventurers lay or civil. It was indeed a task arduous enough to terrify even one who did not possess John Carroll's courage and spirit of devotion. The five years of his prefectship saw all these elements for good and for evil in the Catholic life of the Republic develop with a rapidity which soon dispelled any lingering doubts in the minds of his clergy on the necessity of a more compact canonical organization. Within twenty months the clergy had met again at Whitemarsh and petitioned the Holy See for a bishop. The administration of Church property was causing quarrels and scandals which were threatening the unity of the Church in the United States; the Revolution had not amalgamated the races that had fought side by side for liberty, and the spirit of nationalism in Church affairs was even then looming up as a potent source of antagonism. Religious toleration was not a law of the land in 1785, and did not become universally so until long after the Constitutional Convention of 1787. Dissension in the Church was apparent at the very time when the closest harmony was needed to start religious freedom on its noble way down the years of American life. The ranks of the clergy were thinning rapidly—death and disease were decimating the little band of workers, and if the Church was to live, vocations would need to be fostered, priests

would have to be invited to come to the United States from other lands, and only one endowed with all the power of the episcopate could keep that strict control on ecclesiastical life without which there could be no surety of duration. These five years of Carroll's prefectship were as critical in their own way to the Church as was the uncertainty which ruled the political life of the nation between the Treaty of Paris in 1783, and Washington's election to the Presidency in 1789. It is a singular, not to say providential, coincidence that Washington and Carroll came to their offices at the same time. Washington was inaugurated April 30, 1789; Carroll was consecrated August 15, 1790, and our political organization was fully fashioned in the very year that our church organization was perfected. It was a coincidence emblematic of the amity and concord "which have hitherto existed between the Church and the republic—amity and concord which, instead of being obliterated, are emphasized by the clear-cut distinction made in our fundamental law between the two spheres, the political and the religious." <sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> O'GORMAN, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE CRITICAL PERIOD IN AMERICAN CATHOLIC HISTORY

(1784-89)

The critical period of American Catholic history is synchronous with the five years of John Carroll's Prefectship. As Superior of the Church in the United States, his jurisdiction differed little from that exercised by the Jesuit Superiors from 1634 to 1784, with two exceptions: his power to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation, to bless the Holy Oils, to dedicate churches, etc., and his authority to confer missionary faculties upon the priests who should come to the American missions. Without a more ample jurisdiction, disorder was inevitable. To the "newcomers," as the clergy who entered the Missions were known, the presbyterian form of ecclesiastical government they found in the United States was but the shadow of the substantial episcopal rule they were accustomed to in Europe. In each centre, where the Catholics were sufficiently numerous to support a parish and a priest, it was not long before rebellion against Carroll occurred. The times were hard; there were few comforts of any kind; the Catholics were not numerous and were poor; they were just beginning to enjoy freedom after two and a half centuries of intolerance and of persecution. Freedom brought a number of evils in its train; independence made its spirit felt in every aspect of American life—in literature, in social customs, in politics, and even in religion. And to this attitude of the American Catholic mind there came the worst evil of all—unworthy priests. It was not that the private lives of these men were always morally reprehensible, for the Catholic laity could be trusted to repudiate the ministrations of the hireling. But the truth is that it was open season with ecclesiastics, many of whom left their dioceses in Europe for their dioceses' good; and turbulent men, loving more the adventure of the times and

yielding to a desire for change, found their way here, and in spite of canon law and of church authority, set up their standard in the midst of flocks whose rejoicing in their presence for eagerness to hear the Word of God and to receive the Sacraments clouded their judgment on the calibre of the shepherds who came, unasked and, in so many cases, unannounced. John Carroll had the difficult task of winning these men back to ecclesiastical discipline; he had the severer task of controlling those among the laity who were led astray by the intruders. The story is not a pleasant one, but not to outline its main features is not to know John Carroll at his best.

This and the two succeeding chapters describe the five years of his effort to reconstruct the Church in the United States.

John Carroll's first duty was to learn the condition of his vast prefecture-apostolic; and this he accomplished in 1785-86, visiting Philadelphia and New York. Boston he did not visit until after his return to Baltimore as bishop (Dec. 7, 1790). His Visitation of 1785-86 opened his eyes to the grave and crucial problems which confronted church discipline at this time.

The coincidence of Carroll's election to the See of Baltimore and of Washington's election to the Presidency ends, rather than begins, a striking parallel between the history of the thirteen original States and the history of the Catholic Church within the reconstruction years of 1783-1789. Historical parallels can be easily overdrawn, but it will heighten the picture of the Church's condition at this time if its problems be contrasted with that of the country. The ten years of inaction in the matter of church organization (1773-1783) are matched by the inability of the several States to set up anything more compact than governments of their own. The same difficult task of binding together the thirteen States faced the leaders of all parties, political and religious, not only of the Catholic Faith, but of all the denominations in the Republic. It is true that the same jealousies were not present in the ranks of the Catholic clergy and laity as were visible among the citizens of the northern, middle, and southern States; but there was the same intangible, though ever-present, fear of a strong centralized ecclesiastical jurisdiction as there was of federalization in the Republic up to the Constitutional Convention in 1787. The parallel

becomes more emphatic when we contrast the weakness of the Congress of the Confederation with that of the prefect-apostolic. The absence of a superior with episcopal power to enforce the law of the Church was to have the same paralyzing effect on Catholicism as the absence of a President endowed with power to enforce the laws of Congress throughout the United States. Congress was helpless before the rebellion of a single state; the prefectship was equally an empty title when, as we shall see, rebellion appeared within the ranks of the clergy and the laity. There was no authority in the hands of a simple archpriest, as Carroll was, to raise money for the education of the clergy, just as any attempt at creating an army of soldiers for the defence of the country was then beyond the powers of Congress. And where the disunity of the United States was most felt, namely, in the matter of arranging interstate and international commerce, so also was Carroll to be constantly perplexed with the problem of exercising direction and power over the appointment of priests in the different parts of his vast prefecture, and with the still more anxious problem of making the spiritual union with the Holy See acceptable not only to his own flock but to those who looked upon that flock as part of the citizenship of a free and independent nation. The provisional arrangement under the Congress of the Confederation caused discontent of a kind quite similar, though necessarily upon a much larger scale, to that caused by the temporary arrangement decided upon by the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide among the pioneers of Catholic unity in the land. The same strong nationalistic spirit at home which kept demanding a powerful central government in order to win the respect of foreign powers was not unexperienced by Carroll and by other far-sighted churchmen, such as Molyneux and Farmer, who lived within a stone's throw of the Congress in Philadelphia. The same resentment expressed by those who saw paternalism in the attitude of France during the peace negotiations found a counterpart in the attitude of Carroll, who stated quite clearly in his correspondence that the Church in the United States must be free of all foreign tutelage. Neither Carroll nor any of the others wavered for a moment in their loyal adherence to the Holy See as the centre and the source of all Catholic government; but



that there was wavering over their subjection to a foreign official ministry, such as Propaganda was, there can be little doubt, if the documents at our disposal are to be trusted in their entirety. Both Church and State passed through perilous days during the "Critical Period," as John Fiske calls those six years from 1783 to 1789;<sup>1</sup> but the leaders in both spheres were soon able to rally around them the strongest men of the day, and it is significant that about the very time the Catholic clergy was decided to petition the Holy See for a bishop, the delegates of the several states were in session in Philadelphia, drafting the Constitution of the United States which was to give unity to the republic, stability to its government, and an acknowledged leader in George Washington, its first President.

The United States, as decreed by the Treaty of Peace of Paris, September 3, 1783, meant practically the entire country east of the Mississippi, with the exception of East and West Florida, which had been ceded to Spain.<sup>2</sup> These geographical limits are identical with Carroll's jurisdiction (1784-1789) as Prefect-Apostolic of the Church in the United States. Fortunately, as a body the Catholic Church in the rebelling colonies had become closely identified with the spirit and with the purpose of the Revolution, especially after the support of a great Catholic country like France had been cast into the balance in favour of American independence. Carroll had no Tory or Loyalist problem to solve as had the leaders of some of the non-Catholic religious bodies; and this fact, added to the small number of his people and the fewness of his clergy, would have rendered his work of unification somewhat easy, had it not been that at the crucial moment, his power as Superior was not only uncertain in its extent but embarrassingly vague in its meaning. The Catholic laity and clergy had grown so accustomed to secrecy, to aliases, to verbal subterfuges, to persecution and to death, during the post-Reformation period, wherever the English flag floated in signal of Protestant supremacy, that it is hardly remarkable to find them still timorous even after the adoption of the Constitution

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<sup>1</sup> FISKE, *Critical Period of American History (1783-1789)*. Boston, 1888.

<sup>2</sup> McLAUGHLIN, *The Confederation and the Constitution (1783-1789)*, pp. 8-9. New York, 1905.

(1787-1788) with its religious equality clause,<sup>3</sup> and more especially after the Ordinance of 1787 with its declaration of freedom of worship. The presence, however, of two leading Catholic Americans, Thomas Fitzsimons, of Philadelphia, and Daniel Carroll, of Maryland, the brother of the prefect-apostolic, at the Constitutional Convention in 1787, gave courage to the little groups of Catholics in the several States.<sup>4</sup>

The Catholic Church in the United States was truly a *pusillus grex*, when Father Carroll accepted the onerous task of prefect-apostolic, on February 27, 1785. In a population of almost three millions, the Catholics numbered between twenty-five and thirty thousand souls. The churches and "congregations," or "stations," were scattered, but the localities where groups of Catholics gathered to hear Mass and to receive the Sacraments were known to all the priests then in the American Mission.

The chief problems of church administration during the five years of Carroll's prefectship were all apparent at the time of his acceptance. These were: 1. *The supply of the clergy*. There had been but few accessions during the Revolution, and the natural increase of the Catholic population, together with the growing number of immigrants from Catholic Ireland and from the Catholic parts of Germany and Austria, demanded more spiritual shepherds than were under Carroll's direction. Many of the little band of priests were already old in the service and had become incapacitated by 1785, and the few who had been chaplains in the French forces and who remained were not to be counted upon in the difficult task of creating a compact Catholic organization in the land. 2. *Catholic education*. We have already reviewed the scanty records that tell the story of Catholic effort

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<sup>3</sup> The dates of adoption are as follows: Delaware (December 6, 1787), Pennsylvania (December 12, 1787), New Jersey (December 18, 1787), Georgia (January 2, 1788), Connecticut (January 9, 1788), Massachusetts (February 6, 1788), Maryland (April 28, 1788), South Carolina (May 23, 1788), New Hampshire (June 21, 1788), Virginia (June 25, 1788), New York (June 26, 1788), North Carolina (November 21, 1789), and Rhode Island (May 29, 1790).

<sup>4</sup> SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 345. Charles Carroll of Carrollton was the only Catholic Signer of the Declaration of Independence (1776). Thomas Fitzsimons and Daniel Carroll were the only two Catholic Signers of the Constitution of the United States (1787). Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Daniel Carroll, Dominick Lynch, Thomas Fitzsimons, and Bishop Carroll were the Signers of the Catholic Address to Washington (1789). These names are very frequently confused, as, for example, in O'GORMAN, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

in Colonial days to erect Catholic schools and academies for the children. The need of a Catholic college was evident, and on no one point will Carroll be more firm during these early years of reconstruction than in his determination to erect a school of higher studies in the United States for Catholic boys. Many will be the difficulties to overcome before Georgetown College is finally started, but John Carroll will become its founder in 1789. 3. *A Seminary for the education of priests*. This will prove to be the hardest task of all, but again his dominant personality will overcome every obstacle, and St. Mary's Seminary will be begun simultaneously with Georgetown College. 4. *Relations of clergy and laity*. It will take most of the thirty years of his leadership in the Church of the United States to bring harmony between the people and the priests, but his firm-handedness will never slacken and his determination to keep the laws of the Church free from compromises that have been the bane of Catholic life in other lands will be steady until the end. 5. *Jurisdiction*. Around this topic most of the correspondence of these early years centres. It is the most difficult of all problems Carroll will have to meet, and he will find it necessary to win over both priests and people to the necessity of a stronger juridic power in Church administrative affairs than that possessed by a mere prefect-apostolic.

His Visitation of the Church in the new Republic in the summer and the late autumn of 1785, resulted in accentuating his realization of these problems; and although little that is authentic has come down to us regarding his journey to all the Catholic centres of his prefecture, the Visitation of 1785 vindicated his estimate of Catholicism in the United States, an estimate which he had summarized for Propaganda in his *Letter and Relation* to Cardinal Antonelli in February-March of that same year. We have a glimpse of Carroll's problems in a letter to Father Charles Plowden, written about the time he started out on the Visitation, June 29, 1785:

The prospect before us is immense, but the want of cultivators to enter the field and improve it is a dreadful and discouraging circumstance. I receive applications from every part of the United States, North, South, and West, for clergymen, and considerable property is offered for their maintenance; but it is impossible and cruel to abandon the congregations already formed to go in quest of people who wish to be established into

new ones. I have written in a pressing manner to all whom I conceive likely to come to our assistance, and I hope you will urge the return hither of Charles and Francis Neale, Leonard Brooke, and Thompson, if his health will allow. . . . Encourage all you can meet with, Europeans or Americans, to come among us. We hope soon to have a sum of money lodged in London, to pay the passage of six at least. . . . I find it very difficult where I now live [Rock Creek] to attend to the duties of my present station. It is inconvenient to some to apply to me here; and, however painful it will be to my dear Mother and myself, I apprehend that it will be necessary for me to remove to Baltimore, as a more central situation.<sup>5</sup>

The general situation of the Church in the Republic is also discussed in Carroll's letter to the Nuncio at Paris, Doria Pamphili. The Nuncio wrote to Carroll on July 9, 1784, to congratulate him on his appointment as Superior. This letter was received by the prefect-apostolic on November 26, 1784, and on the same day, the official documents constituting him the juridic head of the Church in this country came from New York, sent on by M. de Marbois. Carroll's reply touches upon the situation between Church and State at the time:

Your Excellency will understand the delicacy of my position, by recalling the jealousy of our government towards all jurisdiction of a foreign kind, a jealousy which heretofore has led to the exclusion of Catholics from any share in the civil administration of several of our States. Catholics are indeed tolerated everywhere to-day, but so far, it is only in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, that they enjoy equal advantages with their fellow-citizens. The Revolution from which we have just emerged has procured us this advantage, but the circumspection we are obliged to use is extreme, so that no pretext for interfering with our rights be given to those who hate us. This is especially necessary now, because the prejudice entertained for so long a time is deep-rooted. The opinion above all which many have formed that our faith exacted a subjection to His Holiness incompatible with the independence of a sovereign state, entirely false though it be, gives us continual worry. To dissipate this prejudice time will be our best aid, as also will Divine Providence, and the experience of our fellow-citizens in our devotion to our country and to its independence. The wisdom of the Holy See will not fail us in this difficult matter. Your Excellency can rest assured that the Apostolic Chair does not possess in the world children more devoted to its doctrines and more penetrated with respect for all its decisions.

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<sup>5</sup> HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, pp. 638-639.



Carroll then asks the Nuncio to use his "powerful protection" in favour of "a feeble portion of the Church, so far distant from the edifying examples which animate the faith and piety of Catholic countries, and so exposed to the contagion of heretical doctrines."<sup>6</sup>

But, before all else it was essential to the welfare of the nascent Church in the Republic not only that the Superior should possess power and jurisdiction in meet proportion to the extent of the problems within his prefecture, but also that whatever power should be conferred by the Holy See be given in such a way that there could be no misunderstanding its exclusively spiritual nature. If Father John Carroll delayed for almost a half-year before accepting the prefectship, it was precisely for the reason that the jurisdiction he received from Propaganda seemed to fall short of the one and to assert the opposite of the other. When he learned from his Roman correspondent, Father John Thorpe, who wrote on August 31, 1785, that a mistake had been made in the Brief of June 9, 1784; and when later, about March 26, 1786, he received Antonelli's letter of July 23, 1785, granting him ampler faculties and a wider jurisdiction, he began to feel easier in mind. But the interval was one of keen embarrassment to a man as sensitive as Carroll on matters of jurisdiction, and there is frequently present in his letters a restraint he felt with an official corporation which had once blundered in so important a matter. Carroll cannot be considered worthy of blame for his earlier attitude of distrust and even of suspicion of Antonelli. The Cardinal-Prefect of Propaganda, Leonardo Antonelli, was a man of the highest virtue and learning, and from sources that are extant it can be shown that he wished the Church in the United States every possible success, even though it was manned by ex-Jesuits. The difficulty with the correspondence of this period is to explain Antonelli's negotiations with the notorious Talleyrand over the Bordeaux project of an American (i.e., pro-French) Seminary. Propaganda's attitude towards the members of the suppressed Society in 1773 could hardly win the confi-

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\* The draft of this letter, written in rather imperfect French, and with so many corrections and erasures that it is difficult to decipher, is in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9A-F1. SHEA (*op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 261) probably lost patience over it, since he merely refers to its contents. I failed to find the original in Paris or in Rome (*Vatican Archives, Nunziatura di Francia*).



dence of those who were then suffering an injustice caused by their loyalty to the Holy See; if Carroll knew at the time, and there is reason to believe that he did, the details of Antonelli's intrigue with Doria Pamphili, the Bishop of Autun, and Benjamin Franklin, he was unquestionably right in presuming that the Roman officials were acting independently.<sup>7</sup> Antonelli is emphatic in his correspondence with Carroll that the prefectship was but a temporary arrangement, and that as soon as the Holy See received all the necessary information and was certain of his ability and capacity, he would be promoted to the dignity of vicar-apostolic, with episcopal character. This is confirmed in Antonelli's letter to the Papal Nuncio at Paris, dated June 30, 1784; and in Doria Pamphili's reply (July 5, 1784) we learn that the matter had been discussed with Franklin. Franklin had assured the Nuncio that he preferred to see Carroll appointed a bishop at once, and also that the American Congress would be pleased to see the Catholic Church in the United States properly organized under its own episcopal authority. "The American Congress," so runs the letter, "will be most pleased with such a consummation, and will not oppose Mr. Carroll's going to Canada for his consecration by the Monseigneur, the Bishop of Quebec, the nearest place, and not so inconvenient or expensive as it would be to come to France, or to go to the Island of San Domingo."<sup>8</sup> Propaganda's hesitation in Carroll's promotion to the episcopal dignity was caused by the rather practical reason of financial support. The Sacred Congregation could not see its way clear to allowing Carroll a subsidy, and so the officials desired to know more about the temporalities of the American Missions before nominating the prefect-apostolic to the higher post. Again, on July 31, 1784, the Cardinal Prefect tells the Nuncio to say to Mr. Franklin that "in what depends upon us,

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<sup>7</sup> For example, on the same day that Antonelli wrote to Carroll announcing to him his appointment as prefect-apostolic (June 9, 1784), he wrote also to the Nuncio at Paris commending him for his zeal and announcing that "it has been decided to treat . . . directly with the American missionaries, and for the present with Mr. Carrol [sic], who has been constituted their head, *except in what concerns the young men who, it is hoped, will be received in the Seminary of Bordeaux*, for which Your Excellency may continue to negotiate with Monseigneur d'Autun [Talleyrand], or with whoever can help to the desired end." (Cf. *Fish-Devitt Transcripts*, p. 32.)

<sup>8</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scrittura riferita, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 272; cf. *Fish-Devitt Transcripts*, p. 37.

it will be sought to invest Mr. Carroll with episcopal character as soon as he has informed us of the status of the Catholic religion in those provinces and of the system to be adopted."<sup>9</sup>

Direct correspondence between Propaganda and the American Church definitely ended the intrigue which, it seems, must be attributed originally to Barbé de Marbois, who was anxious to have a French ecclesiastic appointed bishop over the American Catholics. The Bordeaux scheme, superficially at least, has the appearance of an intrigue to allow French ecclesiastics to control the American Church, and can only be fully understood when placed in relation with the results of the peace negotiations of the former year. France, to tell the truth, felt that the Americans had shown little gratitude in the matter of the peace treaty;<sup>10</sup> and a reaction of this feeling is found in the Nuncio's words to Antonelli, on August 23, 1784: "It is not certain," he writes, "that, as time goes on, the American Republic will continue to be grateful for the signal favours and services of France, and that revolutions will not occur, similar to that of Canada." The Cardinal-Prefect, therefore, was not surprised to learn that the Bordeaux project did not move forward more quickly. In fact, it was evident to the Nuncio that the Government was unwilling to endow the scheme, and wished merely to start it and to support it for a year or so. In Antonelli's next letter, dated September 25, 1784, the Nuncio is asked to inform Franklin "of our disposition for the investiture of Mr. Carroll with the episcopacy."<sup>11</sup>

The fact has already been mentioned that Father Carroll became fully aware of all these secret negotiations through Plowden's letter of September 21, 1784. He himself had written to Father Plowden on September 18 of that year in answer to Plowden's letter of July 3, 1784, and it is clear that the whole matter had become distasteful to him. He was determined, if his fellow-priests would consent, to refuse even the prefectship. He wanted no vicariate-apostolic, and that because it involved not only a foreign title but dependence upon a foreign tribunal, the

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>10</sup> McLAUGHLIN, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-22. Cf. MERLANT-COLEMAN, *Soldiers and Sailors of France in the American War of Independence (1776-1783)*, p. 204. New York, 1920.

<sup>11</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Lettere*, vol. 244, f. 781; cf. *Fish-Devitt Transcripts*, p. 42.

Congregation of Propaganda Fide. It was absurd, to his way of viewing it, to consider the United States a Mission, and he instinctively felt the slight Antonelli had given the American clergy by carrying on negotiations with Franklin. Carroll interpreted the whole intrigue as done in an anti-Jesuit spirit, and he says quite appositely that had Antonelli communicated with him on the bishopric question the answer of the American Congress "would have been even more satisfactory to us than the one which was sent." His brother's triennium in Congress had just expired, and Mr. Fitzsimons, the only Catholic member besides, had just resigned. "These were unfortunate circumstances."<sup>12</sup>

On the other hand, it is unfair to judge Propaganda's action harshly. We have an advantage of a hundred and forty years of a retrospect from which to make such a judgment, although there is a natural feeling of impatience that the officials in Rome did not visualize the Church's condition here more accurately. But with few exceptions it has been the rule of Propaganda to begin ecclesiastical jurisdiction in a new country with prefects-apostolic, followed by vicars-apostolic, and then bishops. Allowance must also be made for the long intervals between letters, and for the fact that the communications with Rome were infrequent and unsatisfactory. So many elements enter into the situation that Antonelli might be excused. There was the querulous method of Challoner to rid himself of the Colonies; the intrigue of which no one seems to be the author, but which arose spontaneously among the little group in Paris to control the American Church; there was the fact that the recognized clergy in America were all ex-Jesuits, and smarting under the injustice of the Suppression; the fact that Carroll's attitude was decidedly nationalistic and that it was embarrassing to him to be appointed over his fellow-clergy without their consent, in fact at variance with their wish expressed to the Holy See; the difficulty of harmonizing what apparently was a foreign and quasi-temporal jurisdiction over a group of American citizens who had just been emancipated from all foreign entanglements; the "cramping clause" of his first year of prefectship, which neutralized his

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<sup>12</sup> Carroll to Plowden, Rock Creek, September 15, 1784, *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 6-J5; cf. *United States Catholic Magazine*, vol. iii, pp. 377-378.

power for direction, when that direction was most needed; and lastly, there was the official opinion of the American clergy in 1784 that it would be inopportune to appoint a bishop. Carroll himself had succumbed to this last influence, and in his letter to Antonelli in February, 1785, had stated that there was no actual need for a bishop, until some candidates were found fitted to receive Holy Orders. It was inevitable, therefore, that the project of creating the United States into a vicariate-apostolic or a bishopric would be deferred. This, perhaps, was the more prudent course of action to take; but if Carroll and Propaganda were both waiting to ascertain whether conditions in the Church here necessitated a stronger and firmer hand of authority than the archipresbyterate, which had failed so miserably in England, they were not long in learning the same. Carroll's Visitation was to reveal the forces of disunion and even of decay at work within the nascent Church, and also to bring to maturity the episcopal administrative system the country should have had as early as 1685, when the London Vicariate was accepted by the English Government.

With his mother's home at Rock Creek as a centre, Father John Carroll began his Visitation of his prefecture in the summer of 1785. The actual date of the first stage of his journey is not known, though it is probable that he laid the cornerstone of the new church at St. Inigoes on July 13 of that year. His first visits were to the different "stations," "congregations," "residences," and "houses" in Maryland. Attending to the spiritual needs of the flock in the State were nineteen priests, all of whom had fixed residences. Father Carroll administered the Sacrament of Confirmation wherever he stopped.<sup>13</sup> There was nothing of an especial nature in the Church in Maryland that needed the exercise of his jurisdiction, except matrimonial cases. After Maryland came the scattered "congregations" of Virginia with its 200 Catholics, living mostly in the northern counties of that State along the Potomac. Up to the time of Carroll's Visitation, they had been visited four or five times a year by the

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<sup>13</sup> SHEA, (*op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 273), says that Carroll procured Holy Chrism for this purpose, but it is not certain where he obtained it; probably from the nearest diocese, Santiago de Cuba, where Father Campo sent for the necessary Holy Oils for his Minorcan colony in Florida.



priests from Maryland.<sup>14</sup> Virginia had been more perturbed than any of the Southern colonies over the danger of Catholicism during the French and Indian War, but the annoying Act of 1756 "for Disarming Papists" and forbidding them to keep a horse "above the value of £5" was abrogated in 1776 by the adoption of the famous Bill of Rights, drawn up by George Mason, to which Patrick Henry contributed the religious equality clause. To no less a personage than Cardinal Robert Bellarmine can be given the credit for the theory of government enshrined in the Bill, as well as in its subsequent imitation, the Declaration of Independence.<sup>15</sup>

The summer of 1785 was one of intense heat, and in August, Father Carroll returned to Rock Creek to await the cooler days of early autumn before starting north. There remained to be visited—Pennsylvania with New Jersey, and New York. New England had never shown a spirit of hospitality to Catholics or to things Catholic. There had been a partial Catholic immigration in 1755, when a group of the exiled Acadians attempted to find a refuge in Massachusetts, but the Faith did not survive among their children, placed as they were in the midst of a population that was determined to destroy their solidarity as a people. Private prayers were not illegal, but the services of a priest were refused these "lost Gabriels of the Great Expulsion." The French Alliance was of considerable commercial value to the New Englanders, and by degrees during the War of Independence, the old spirit of bigotry lost the thin edge it had held for nearly two hundred years. There was likewise an Irish Catholic immigration into New England, which began about 1717<sup>16</sup> and continued up to the Revolution; but there is no record of any attempt at a permanent Church. In 1779, Father Henry de la Motte, an Augustinian chaplain of the French fleet, who was imprisoned in New York for saying Mass, was exchanged, and came to Boston. He was sent by the Colonial Government as an envoy to the Catholic Indians of Maine.<sup>17</sup> In 1781, Father Lacy, an Irish

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<sup>14</sup> MAGRI, *The Catholic Church in the City and Diocese of Richmond*, p. 38. Richmond, 1906.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. GAILLARD HUNT, *The Virginia Declaration of Rights and Cardinal Bellarmine in the Catholic Historical Review*, vol. iii, pp. 276-289.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. O'BRIEN, *Hidden Phase, etc.*, pp. 241-285.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Researches*, vol. xvi, p. 111.



priest, is said to have visited Boston, and we know from the Abbé Robin's *Travels* that the witty French priest visited the city, though nothing is said in his volume of the presence of Catholics in Boston. There was, therefore, no cause for Father Carroll to visit this part of the Republic, and indeed, the first authentic page in the history of the Church in New England was not written until 1788, when the notorious French priest, Claudius Florent Bouchard de la Poterie was authorized by Carroll to minister to the Catholics of Boston.

In Pennsylvania, at the time of Carroll's appointment, there were five priests with definite parishes to attend. Philadelphia possessed two churches, St. Joseph's and St. Mary's, both under the same pastors, Fathers Molyneux and Farmer. At Conewago, Father James Pellentz had erected a church, and in Lancaster, Father Luke Geissler was ministering to the scattered Catholics in that vicinity. Father John B. de Ritter was at Goshenhoppen, with a large territory under his care. St. Joseph's Church, in Philadelphia, the oldest church in the English colonies, erected in 1733, by Father Joseph Greaton, who had been visiting the city regularly from the year 1722, was the centre of the Pennsylvania missions. The agreement between the heirs of Lord Baltimore and William Penn in 1732, regarding the southern boundary of Pennsylvania, had removed the obstacle to the erection of a place of worship for the Catholics of Philadelphia, and the following year saw this first public Catholic chapel in the Colonies opened for Divine service. The number of Catholics in the old national Capital at this time is not known. Kirlin quotes one source as computing the number to be ten or twelve; another source estimates the "congregation" as about forty souls. Smyth's *Present State of the Catholic Missions conducted by the Ex-Jesuits in North America* states that at the opening of St. Joseph's there were thirty-seven Catholics—twenty-two Irish and fifteen Germans. On March 21, 1741, Father Greaton was joined by Father Henry Neale, who died seven years later, and the following year (1749) Father Greaton retired to Bohemia Manor and was succeeded in Philadelphia by Father Harding. The census of 1757, compiled by Father Harding, gives the Catholic population of Pennsylvania as consisting of 692 men and 673 women, making a total of 1,365 Catholics. At the close of the

French and Indian War, a second church, that of St. Mary's, was opened in Philadelphia. "The Sunday services," say Kirlin, "with the exception of an early Mass at St. Joseph's, were held in St. Mary's, and the older church was used as a chapel where the week-day Masses were said."<sup>18</sup> In 1758, Father Farmer was appointed assistant to Father Harding, and after the latter's death, September 1, 1772, Father Farmer was in charge until June, 1773, when Father Robert Molyneux was sent as his co-pastor. Both these priests were in Philadelphia when Father Carroll visited the city in October, 1785, though Father Farmer did not survive very long after Carroll's visit, dying August 17, 1786. The statistics given by Carroll in his *Relation* (March 1, 1785) were gathered from letters sent to him by these two pioneer Catholic clergymen, both of whom were highly instrumental in persuading Carroll to accept the prefectship.<sup>19</sup> The parishes outside Philadelphia were fairly numerous at this time. From Conewago, where Father Wapeler had founded the Church of the Sacred Heart, shortly after his arrival in that mission (1741), Father Pellentz reported to Carroll that there were 1,000 communicants in the parish. Father Schneider, who had begun the mission at Goshenhoppen in 1745, passed away on July 10, 1764, and was succeeded by Father John B. de Ritter, who estimated 500 communicants in his charge at the time of Carroll's Visitation. Father Luke Geissler, then pastor of the Catholics around Lancaster, had about 700 souls in his care. Besides Fathers Molyneux and Farmer, there were also at the time in Philadelphia, Father William O'Brien, O.P., Father Huet de la Valinière, who attended the French Catholics, and Father Hassett, who officiated for the Spanish residents.<sup>20</sup> There was also at this time at Lancaster the Rev. John B. Causse, a Recollect Father, known also by his name in religion, Father Fidentianus. These are meagre details of the condition of the Church in Pennsylvania, but they furnish us with a fair example of Father Carroll's knowledge of this part of his Prefecture.

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<sup>18</sup> KIRLIN, *Catholicity in Philadelphia*, p. 94. Philadelphia, 1907.

<sup>19</sup> This interesting correspondence, quoted elsewhere in this volume, can be read in the *United States Catholic Magazine*, vol. iv, pp. 255-259; it will be found in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 3-P 4-14, and Q1-10, Case 5-K and L.

<sup>20</sup> Molyneux to Carroll, March 28, 1785, *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 5K-1; cf. SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 275, note 4.

The prefect-apostolic began his northern Visitation on September 22, 1785. He administered Confirmation in Philadelphia in the early part of October, 1785.<sup>21</sup> Whether he visited the other Catholic congregations is not known with certainty, for there is nothing in the correspondence we possess to show that he extended his Visitation beyond the two cities of Philadelphia and New York. From Philadelphia, his journey northwards took him through New Jersey. The early history of the Church in the Jerseys is obscure. It is known that Father Harding paid occasional visits to that province, but the pioneer missionary of the State was Father Farmer. The Baptismal Register of St. Joseph's Church, Philadelphia, gives us the names of all the "Stations" in Jersey visited by this valiant soldier of the Cross, around whom tradition has woven some of the best-loved of all early American Catholic historical legends. Macopin, about fifteen miles north of Paterson, would seem to be the centre of these New Jersey missions, which stretched from Ringwood to Salem. The little town had been settled by a colony of Germans from the Rhineland, who came to take positions in the iron works there.<sup>22</sup> It is quite possible from what we know of the stage routes of that day that Father Carroll visited some of these "congregations," but no details are extant of his Visitation in New Jersey.

It was in New York City that Father Carroll met with the first difficult problem of his five years as prefect-apostolic. The province of New Amsterdam and later of New York had had a long period of Catholic history before the coming of Carroll in the autumn of 1785. It was known throughout the Catholic world as the scene of some of the most heroic episodes in the missionary history of the Jesuits, and Father Jogues' martyrdom gave it a prominence in European eyes which Pennsylvania and Maryland never attained. The short Catholic governorship of Thomas Dongan (1683-1688) witnessed an attempt by Father Thomas Harvey, S.J., to establish a Latin school in the city,<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> GRIFFIN in the *Researches* (vol. xiii, p. 173) is uncertain whether the date is October second or ninth. It was during this visit that Carroll met Wharton at the house of FitzSimons.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *United States Catholic Magazine*, vol. vi, p. 434. Father Farmer's *List of Baptisms*, registered at St. Joseph's Church, Philadelphia, will be found in the *Records*, vol. i, pp. 246-350. A list of the various "stations" will be found, *ibid.*, pp. 249-250.

<sup>23</sup> There is little doubt that James II, the Duke of York, sought to make his Province a refuge for the oppressed Catholics of England; it is a matter worthy of

but with the Orange Revolution under Leisler, Catholic life in the city came to an end. In 1696, the Mayor of the city gave a list of nine Catholics to Governor Fletcher; the passage of the Act of 1700 meant perpetual imprisonment for any Catholic priest found in the province. No man dared avow himself a Catholic, and the general effect of the intolerant spirit was to keep Catholics from settling in the future metropolis. The Negro Plot of 1741, with the hanging of John Ury, who was supposed to be a Catholic priest, reawakened a "holy horror of Popery," which prevailed down to the Revolution.<sup>24</sup> "The first priests who officiated in the city in any way in a public manner, were the chaplains of the French troops who had been sent to aid the colonies in their struggle. I find a manuscript note amongst the late Bishop Bruté's papers, in which he speaks of hearing 'Mother Seton say that it was a great object of curiosity amongst the New Yorkers to attend the celebration of Mass by the chaplains of the French troops at the time of the war.'"<sup>25</sup> New York was slow to change its attitude of open hostility to the Catholic Faith, even after the establishment of its own Legislature, and the State Constitution of 1777 excluded Catholics from the rights of citizenship. In 1784, the Act of 1700 regarding "Popish Priests and Jesuits" was repealed by the New York Legislature, but it was not until 1806 that the Oath of Allegiance, which no loyal Catholic could conscientiously take, was abrogated.<sup>26</sup> After the evacuation of the city by the British troops in 1783, Father Farmer assembled the Catholics of the city for Divine worship. Archbishop Bayley reports a tradition that Mass was celebrated in 1781-82 in a loft over a carpenter's shop near Barclay Street, then in the suburbs, and that services were held also in the house

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record in the history of religious liberty in America that the New York Assembly of 1683, the first held in Dongan's term, adopted a Charter of Liberties granting freedom of worship to all Christians. Cf. Dongan's Report on the State of the Province, in O'CALLAGHAN, *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York*, vol. iii. p. 410. Albany, 1887. Only a few Catholics were known to be in the Province at that time.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *The Trial of John Ury*, in the *Researches*, vol. xvi, pp. 2-58.

<sup>25</sup> This is evidently an error, since the city of New York was in the possession of the British during the Revolution. Probably, Mother Seton refers to the arrest of Father De la Motte for celebrating Mass in the city. Cf. BAYLEY, *History of the Catholic Church on the Island of New York*, pp. 47-48. New York, 1870.

<sup>26</sup> For a copy of these Oaths against Transubstantiation cf. DEVEREUX, *A Memorial of the Penal Times in New York in the United States Catholic Miscellany*, vol. vi, pp. 394-395.



of the Spanish Consul, Don Thomas Stoughton. The home of Don Diego de Gardoqui, the Spanish Minister, seems also to have been the rendezvous of the Catholics of New York in 1785. The actual beginning of Catholic church organization can be traced to the coming in October, 1784, of Father Charles Whelan, an Irish Capuchin, who had served as chaplain in De Grasse's fleet, and who apparently was so touched by the destitute spiritual condition of the Catholics of New York City that he decided to remain among them. Shea says that Father Whelan may have acted at first merely as private chaplain to the Portuguese Catholic, José Ruiz Silva; and this seems likely because he began his ministry without waiting for faculties from the Prefect-Apostolic. John Talbot Smith writes:

His arrival occurred at a happy moment for him and his congregation. The government of the United States held its seat in New York; the foreign ministers resided there. At the meetings of Congress Catholic members came to live in town, and Catholic merchants from France and Spain and their American possessions were establishing offices. The great social lights of official life were the ministers of France and of Spain. They had their embassy chapels and chaplains, and their high rank and influence gave standing to the Catholics. Father Whelan did not seem to meet with success in organizing his parish after his arrival, and reported to the Superior that the congregation was in a poor way, buried in difficulties and displeased with the pastor.<sup>27</sup>

Father Carroll was informed by Father Farmer in a letter, dated Philadelphia, November 8, 1784, of Father Whelan's arrival in New York:

A Capuchin friar arrived a few weeks ago in New York. The congregation has received him for a time and allows him, consequently, a sustenance. I warned some of the principal members of not trusting themselves to him without your approbation. He has a variety of very good credentials, which I have inspected.<sup>28</sup> I found no fault but his too great presumption to act as if he had legal [i. e. juridic] powers. I checked him for it. He had no other but the lame excuse that your reverence had not yet received your powers. . . . If in your discretion your reverence thinks

<sup>27</sup> SMITH, *The Catholic Church in New York*, vol. i, pp. 27-28. New York, 1903. The Italian traveller, Luigi Castiglione, mentions hearing Mass in a *camera poco decente* in his *Viaggio negli Stati Uniti*, part i, p. 177.

<sup>28</sup> BAYLEY (*op. cit.*, p. 56 note) states that he was informed that Father Whelan had been strongly recommended by Lafayette before the latter's return to France.



proper to give Mr. Whelan faculties for a time . . . , please to let me know it as soon as convenient.<sup>29</sup>

Father Farmer was acting in this regard in his capacity of vicar-general to the prefect-apostolic, a post which he had occupied also under the last Jesuit Superior, Father Lewis. "It was a sign of coming difficulties," says Shea, "that Father Whelan officiated without waiting for faculties."<sup>30</sup> Father Farmer advised him to apply at once to the Nuncio in Paris for faculties, since it was not certain whether the prefect-apostolic would have the power to do so. This is the first example of the difficulty caused by the "cramping clause" in Carroll's appointment. On January 11, 1785, Father Farmer wrote to Whelan telling him that the matter of his faculties would be attended to at once. The letter is as follows:

Your favour of the second instant came to hand yesterday. A few weeks ago I wrote a letter to Mr. MacReady, in which I mentioned what concerned your Reverence, without writing a particular letter; in which I must acknowledge my fault. I am also afeard, that my letter did not come to Mr. MacReady's hand. After I last [visited] New York we had no small difficulty to find out the letters from Rome to Mr. Carrol. For those I received at New York were no more than a power to give out in these states next year a jubilee; the cause of which is, as I suppose, our having been deprived of it in 1776, when the principal letters from Rome and Paris were at last found out; we also found that, the Rd. J. Carrol was appointed by the Congr. de Propaganda. . . . This limitation puts us to no small inconveniences, and also the people. I have many times thought of y. last Christmass and of your congregation, being sorry, faculties necessary could not be given you. The best advice I can give is to write immediately to the Nuncio at Paris to give or procure y. the approbation of the propaganda; which being obtained, there shall be no more difficulty on that side of y. settlement in New York. In the letters from Rome it was signified to Mr. Carrol, to let them know the number of R. Catholicks in this country; for w. reason Mr. Carrol desired me to request of y. w. number of them there is in N. York. He would undoubtedly have wrote to you; but relyed on my doing it for him.

May it please the Divine goodness to protect and preserve you. I beg to be remembered in your h. prayers and am *Rev. dear Sir*

*Your most hble servant*

FERDINAND FARMER,<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 3-P4; cf. *United States Catholic Miscellany*, vol. vi, p. 103.

<sup>30</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 265.

<sup>31</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 300.

Accordingly, on January 28, 1785, Father Whelan sent the following communication to the Papal Nuncio, Doria Pamphili, at Paris, together with a letter of recommendation from Hector St. John de Cr veco ur, then Consul-General of France in New York City :

*May it please your Eminence,*

As it pleased Almighty God, of his infinite goodness, to call me, (tho' an unworthy subject) to the state of priest, I therefore endeavoured always by his divine grace to perform the duties of my state; which so far pleased my superiors that they judged it convenient, to elect me Father master of the novices; likewise Vicar of the Convent of Barsur-aube in Champagne, also secretary to the Provincial of the Irish Capucins residing in the same convent. Which places I always retained until his most Christian Majesty Louis the XVI was pleased to call for chaplains to our Community for the sea-service, in obedience to my superiors, and with the inclosed obedience I undertook this mission. After passing without hurt out of fourteen engagements at sea, was at length taken prisoner with Mr. Village, Knight of Malta, in the ship called the Jason, and was brought prisoner to Jamaica together with about seven thousand French-men; fifteen hundred of which being wounded, after having exhorted all the other chaplains being six in number, four French and two Spaniards, to visit at least their respective sick and wounded, they all made answer "they were no longer bound to attend them being exempt of that duty by being prisoners of war." But I judging it contrary to christianity to abandon so many distressed persons, great numbers of them dying daily, by the flux and yellow fever: besides their wounds, I undertook the whole work myself, and by divine assistance let none die without the rites of the Church, tho all the five prisons which were at that time in Jamaica were changed into hospitals, the number of sick being so great in that warm climate, in a word I administered three thousand five hundred and sixty-two French-men; eight hundred Spaniards, and thirty-five Americans, without any gratification. This is a fact that all can give testimony of that were carried in with Count de Grace, during thirteen months, I remained in that island without any other occasion than to assist the dying prisoners.

But passing through the province of New York where toleration being granted of exercising our religion publickly without restraint, where heretofore a priest would be condemned to die for only celebrating Mass or administering any of the Sacraments: which is the reason I find so many here even married without being baptized or any way instructed in their religion. The Catholics here are exceeding poor but very zealous as the major part of them are Irish being not able to build a chapel nor even to pay for a place to say Mass in; had not a Portuguese gentleman made us a present of part of his house for that purpose. I hope Providence will provide for us some other place next May as that gentle-

man can afford it to us only until that time, but I hope God will do what is necessary as poverty is no fault with him, neither do I think it a fault as money is not the object of my labours, but the glory of God and the salvation of the souls. The French Consul Mr St John is a strenuous good friend to religion and advances our cause as much as possible, and introduced me to the Marquis de la Fayette, who zealously recommended me to the Governour and Magistrates, and also engaged their protection in my behalf.

His Excellency Monsieur de Marbois is arrived here which will be additional support to our cause. I applied to Rev. Mr. Carrol who is appointed Prefect Apostolick, by the Court of Rome in those parts for faculties necessary for my mission his Vicar the Rev Mr Ferdinand Farmer, examined my credentials and soon after sent me the letter herein inclosed: which is the cause I trouble your Eminence hoping you will be kind enough to spare me the pains of writing to Rome as work presses and Easter is coming on which is the harvest of the Lord to assemble the stray-sheep lost from the flock these many years past. I have brought over to our Faith (*Deo adjuvante*) a great many of every denomination since I am here. I was surprized to find how easy it is to convince them of their error in this country. I would have wrote to you in latin had I not been persuaded you were acquainted with all the languages of Europe.

Here it is necessary for a clergyman to understand at least Irish, English, French and Dutch as our Congregation is composed of those nations, likewise Portuguese and Spaniards. Submitting these matters to the wise judgment of Your Eminence, your compliance and answer will enable me to perform the duties of my state with more alacrity and bind him under the strictest obligations who has the honour to be with the most profound respect,

*Your Eminence's most humble and most obedient servant*

BR. MAURICE WHELAN, *Cap.*

The letter of recommendation was as follows:

*Monseigneur,*

Votre Excellence ne trouvera pas mauvais, j'ose m'en flatter, qu'un étranger non seulement s'adresse à elle, mais mesme se soit chargée de luy faire passer la lettre d'un autre personne également étrangère. Le Rév. Père Maurice Whelan arrive ici depuis six mois, pour y recouvrer sa santé qu'il avoit perdue à la Jamaïque où Mr. le Comte de Grassi l'avoit envoyé pour administrer les malades de la flotte, a été cordialement invité d'y rester par un petit troupeau de Romains Catholiques qui s'y trouve. Sa conduite édifiante, ses mœurs pacifiques et doux ont beaucoup plu aux membres de ce petit troupeau, ils luy ont offert un salaire honnête.

Dix sept sectes possèdent en ce pays autant d'églises décentes dans cette ville, le culte Rom. Cath. étoit le seul qui en fuste proscript avant cette

révolution, aujourd'hui les membres de cette persuasion désideroient aussy en fonder une. Comme Consul de France et comme François j'ay parlé au Gouverneur, au Maire de la ville; on est très disposé à leur concéder un terrain, ainsy que les membres des autres sectes à contribuer, suivant l'usage et la construction de ce nouveau temple. Tel est Monseigneur l'état des choses, le bon prestre Irlandois m'a prié de faire passer à V. E. la lettre et les papiers. Je M'en suis chargé, quoique avec diffidence.

Peutestre j'ay peché par quelques formes, mais Votre Eminence voudra bien me pardonner, en considération du grand nombres d'années que j'ay passé dans ce pays où on les ignore.<sup>32</sup>

Father Whelan's statistics, computing the number of Catholics in New York as about two hundred, found their place in Carroll's *Relation* of March 1, 1785, and Father Whelan himself receives particular mention in the same document:

In the State of New York, I hear there are at least 1500 [Catholics]. They have recently, at their own expense, sent for a Franciscan priest from Ireland, and he is said to have the best testimonials as to his learning and life; he arrived a little while before I received the letters in which faculties were transmitted to me, communicable to my fellow-priests. I was for a time in doubt whether I could properly approve this priest for the administration of the Sacraments. I have now, however, decided, especially as the feast of Easter is so near, to consider him as one of my fellow-priests, and to grant him faculties, and I trust that my decision will meet your approval.<sup>33</sup>

About this time Father Farmer sent the following report (May 21, 1785) on the New York situation to Father Carroll:

The Rev. Mr. Whelan, from New York writeth to me, that he counts about *two hundred*. I have advised him to write to the nuncio at Paris for a propaganda approbation, which letter of mine, the French consul has sent to the nuncio. But I have learned since, from a friend of mine in New York, that some of our people are scandalized at the gentleman's taking upon him to hear confessions, as I, when there, had told them that he had no powers. He did so, when I was there, that is, he heard the confession of a couple he was to marry. I gently checked him for it, for fear of making him think I slighted him on account of his order. But I see now, I should not have spared him; for an absolution that is null could not have put the couple in a state of grace. I intend, as soon as I get leisure, to write to him, and to endeavour to draw him

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, l. c., vol. ii, f. 302-304.

<sup>33</sup> Farmer to Carroll, February 21, 1785, *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 3-P5, cited by BAYLEY, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

out of his ignorance and presumption. *Si Domino placuerit*, I purpose on my return from the iron works of Jersey, to go again to New York, the latter end of April, when as my friend, a merchant of that place, writeth, the Catholics will meet and receive my instructions. I intend to set out from Philadelphia April the 10th, which I thought necessary to signify to your reverence, that your answer containing necessary instructions for me may arrive in good time.<sup>34</sup>

Before setting out for New York, Father Farmer communicated again with the prefect-apostolic (March 13, 1785):

About three weeks ago, I wrote a letter to your reverence concerning Mr. Whelan in New York; but doubting whether the post delivered it to Mr. Sewal, to whom I had sent it inclosed; I found it necessary to inform your reverence shortly, that the above mentioned gentleman takes upon him to hear confessions. I lately wrote to him to make him sensible of the illegality of such proceedings, and their utter invalidity *quoad materiam necessariam confessionis*.

Moreover, I am informed that he says two masses every Sunday, and I suppose also holy days. And he did the same on All Souls while I was at the place, as far as I remember. I intend, towards the end of April, to be in that city; be pleased to send me necessary instructions concerning him, and also a letter to him if thought proper. When I was there last fall, I informed several friends of his want of power to hear confessions; I also wrote the 2d of December last, a letter to one of my acquaintances there with information that no clergyman arriving in that city could exercise such functions unless under the direction or appointment of the apostolic prefect.<sup>35</sup>

Father Farmer's proposed visit occurred before the end of April, 1785, and on his return he wrote to the prefect-apostolic a detailed account of the state of the Church in that city:

What regards Mr. Whelan's conduct, I attribute it to an ignorance of the canon law, through which he persuaded himself, that what he could do in Ireland, he also could do here, and where he saw the necessity of confessing, he imagined to have jurisdiction, though I believe even of that term he was ignorant before I wrote him upon that subject a little before your grant of faculties arrived. His answers are always submissive, and I believe his behavior too; for after I wrote to him he had no faculty to say two masses, he ceased directly. I suppose what made him before take that liberty was the common practice of Dublin and elsewhere in Ireland, where, as I am informed, every priest says two

<sup>34</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 3-P6; cf. *United States Catholic Miscellany*, vol. vi, p. 104.

<sup>35</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 3-P7; cf. *ibid.*, p. 104.



masses on Sunday. This is what I can say to excuse him, yet I shall send your letter to him that he may have some opportunity of disculpating himself. His moral conduct is not scandalous. But a number of his countrymen, my old acquaintances, and others do not like him; he is not very prudent, nor eloquent when speaking in public, nor has he the gift of ingratiating himself. Whilst in New York, I several times exhorted him to make himself beloved of the people. He is now going about begging subscriptions (for building a chapel) among Protestants. He is fit for that purpose, and gets numbers of subscriptions. But in choosing the ground for it, he did not consult the abler part of his congregation, but suffers himself to be swayed by a Portuguese gentleman, a great benefactor of his. The congregation seems to me to be yet in a poor situation and under many difficulties. He had since getting faculties only twenty odd communicants, and I had eighteen, three of whom were Germans. When I left New York they were entirely out of place for keeping church, which may partly be ascribed to his want of his taking notice of his countrymen, and of his adhering to the opinion of the Portuguese gentleman. The above reverend gentleman informed me that a Canadian gentleman, an agent from the Illinois to congress, having been there six months, made him a proposal of the revenues of a parish or parishes in those parts which he said would come to one thousand pound sterling per annum. The reverend father showed me even a pass thither from the president of congress, and the Canadian gentleman offered to defray all his expenses. But he declined going at present, being intent, as he told me, to make first an establishment at New York. Another reason might have been, what he heard last fall of me, to wit, that the Carmelite friar, his old friend and acquaintance, was gone thither; another, again, that he having brought with him two brothers and families to New York, he could not well have taken them with him so far. The Irish having written to Father Jones, to Cork, I could not well help to inform them, that he must first have his approbation from the propaganda. An old correspondent of mine, in Dublin, writeth, that though he hath zeal, his education is but little polished. Mr. Whelan thinks that he will not come over, as he is better off, where he is, than he would be in New York. I am sorry I gave Mr. Whelan the advice to write to the nuncio, at Paris; for he even sent my own letter to him along with his papers. He is much backed and swayed by the French consul in New York. . . . Scarce was I arrived there, when an Irish merchant paid me a visit, and asked me if Mr. Whelan was settled over them. My answer, as far as I can remember, was, he had only power to perform parochial duties; but if the congregation did not like him, and could better themselves, they were not obliged to keep him. Some days after, another, seeing Mr. Whelan's endeavours to settle himself there, as it were, in spite of them, declared to me, he had a mind to apply to the legislature for a law, that no clergyman should be forced upon them: which he thought he could easily obtain. I endeavoured to reconcile them, by telling Mr. Whelan to make himself agreeable to his

countrymen, and by telling these, to be contented with what they have at present, for fear of worse.<sup>86</sup>

Meanwhile (April 16, 1785), Father Carroll had given faculties to the Irish Capuchin,<sup>87</sup> and Father Whelan's letter to the Nuncio had been forwarded to Rome. On June 4, 1785, Cardinal Antonelli wrote to Father Carroll, granting faculties to Father Whelan, and advising the Prefect that the *Relatio* of the state of the missions in America had not yet reached Rome. He requests Carroll to send this information as soon as possible, and also to state his own opinion regarding the proposed creation of a vicariate for the United States.<sup>88</sup> On the same day, the Cardinal-Prefect answered de Crèveœur, saying that the Congregation preferred Father Whelan to receive his faculties from Father Carroll, who had been empowered with this jurisdiction in the United States. The letter to Carroll was sent enclosed in this one to de Crèveœur.<sup>89</sup> Father Whelan had gained the good will

<sup>86</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 3-P7, cf. *ibid.*, p. 144.

<sup>87</sup> Letter dated February 21, 1785, *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9A-F2; cf. *ibid.*, p. 104.

<sup>88</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Lettere*, vol. 246, f. 307:

R. D. Carroll Superiori Missionum in Philadelphia. 4 Junii 1785.

Ex litteris R. Ferdinandi Farmer, vicarii tui, datis die 11 Januarii huius anni ad P. Mauritium Whelan Ordinis Cappuccinorum, intelleximus nihil aliud ob stare quominus eidem facultates administrandi sacramenta tribuas, nisi defectum approbationis huius S. Congregationis de Propaganda fide. Per has ergo litteras sciat Dominatio Tua, plenarie ab eadem Sacra Congregatione remissum esse arbitrio tuo, immo etiam commendatum, ut solitas in istis regionibus facultates missionarii, quoad valueris, et quatenus dignus reperiatur, eidem P. Mauritio Whelan concedas, ad quem effectum approbationem suam eadem haec S. Congregatio praemittit.

Hic vero addimus, desiderari adhuc a nobis responsum tuum ad nostras litteras, quas anno praeterito scripsimus, ut de omni statu istarum missionum plenam nobis faceres relationem, simulque iudicium tuum de vicariatu apostolico isthic erigendo patefaceres. Cures igitur, ut satisfacias quantocius poteris his votis nostris; interea vero omnem a Deo tibi felicitatem precamur.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, l.c., f. 346:

D. Saint Jean Consuli.—New York. 4 Junii 1785.

Redditae mihi fuerunt ab Eminmo. Cardinali Doria litterae, quas Dominatio Tua eidem scripserat sub die 15 Januarii proxime elapsi, ut ab hac S. Congregatione de Propaganda Fide impetraret facultates missionarii pro R. P. Mauritio Whelan Ordinis Cappuccinorum. Libenter vero commendationi Dominationis Tuae adhaerendum censuit eadem Sacra Congregatio, sed quia deputatus ab ipsa missionum Superior in istis regionibus adest Dominus Caroll cum facultatibus necessariis et opportunis, idcirco ad hunc remittenda fuit petitio Patris Whelan quod etiam sufficere ex ipsius litteris demonstratur. Hic igitur adnexam Dominationi Tuae transmitto epistolam pro ipso superiore D. Caroll, ex qua desiderio, et commendationi Tuae satisfactum iri confidimus. Interim vero Deum precor, ut Dominationem Tuam diu sospitem, atque incolumem servet.

of de Crèvecoeur who, though not a fervent Catholic, seems to have been accepted as the leader of the little congregation. In their name, on June 10, 1785, together with José Ruiz Silva, James Stewart, and Henry Duffin, the Roman Catholic "Trustees in the City of New York" were incorporated, and during the summer, a plot of ground for a church was purchased on Barclay Street. Progress had thus been made before Carroll's arrival in October-November, 1785, and the cornerstone was laid on November 4, 1785. We have so few details of Carroll's Visitation in New York City that, as Shea says, we might almost doubt whether he actually set out for New York, were it not that Father Farmer in a letter, dated March 30, 1786, makes mention of the Whelan-Nugent difficulty which arose "after your departure."<sup>40</sup>

The remaining portion of his prefecture was that large and almost unknown territory between the Alleghanies and the Mississippi River. Father Carroll seems to have made no attempt to visit the Catholics in this territory. In his *Letter* of February 27, 1785, he makes mention of the fact that "there went to them a priest, German by birth, but who came last from France, who professes to belong to the Carmelites, and who is furnished with sufficient testimonials from his lawful superior. What he is doing and what is the condition of the Church in those parts I expect soon to learn." This is the earliest official testimony we have concerning Father Paul de St. Pierre, the courageous German missionary of the Mississippi Valley. Father Farmer had written to Carroll about the Carmelite friar on July 19, 1783, telling Father Carroll that Father Paul de St. Pierre had arrived in Virginia with the French troops and had written to him, asking to be located permanently in the American mission. Father Farmer replied that it would be best for Paul de St. Pierre to remain with the "French Consul in Virginia." A year later, we find the Carmelite in Philadelphia, where he was furnished by Father Farmer with a letter of introduction to the Prefect-Apostolic, dated October 9, 1784.<sup>41</sup> Father de St. Pierre went to

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<sup>40</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 3-P9; cf. *United States Catholic Magazine*, vol. vi, p. 147; SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 274, note 2.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. ROTHENSTEINER, *Paul de St. Pierre, the First German-American Priest of the West*, in the *Catholic Historical Review* (vol. v, pp. 195-222), has given us a detailed account of the Carmelite's life.

the Illinois country at the end of the year 1789, and his missionary activities from that time until his death in 1826 have given him an enviable place in the American Catholic history of the Valley.<sup>42</sup>

Father Carroll returned to Rock Creek in December, 1785, and the results of his Visitation, incomplete and haphazard as his journey seems to us today with our perfected system of church administration, were definite enough on several points. There were more Catholics in the United States than he had believed when he wrote to Antonelli, in February-March, 1785. The necessity of priests was greater than the Select Body of the Clergy realized. Educational needs were imperative. Schools for the education of the children, academies and colleges for higher studies, and a seminary for the training of young Americans to the priesthood, were all badly wanted at the time. There was the system of lay trustee management, which might at any time, as he wisely foresaw, prove a danger to church harmony.

There was above all the necessity for episcopal authority in the land.

The territory covered in the Visitation was not geographically a large one. New England was not visited; the situation of the Church there being too unimportant to warrant the long journey from New York. Nothing remained for him after his return to Rock Creek but to regulate as best he could through the vicars-general of the districts the ordinary routine of church discipline and to await the trend of events. That the chief thought in his mind was the necessity of a more compact canonical rule in the country is certain. His correspondence with Fathers Plowden and Thorpe are proof of this. Father Thorpe's letters from Rome during this period are filled with the question of the appointment of Carroll as bishop of the Church in the United States. In his letter of December 2, 1786, Thorpe says:

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<sup>42</sup> He was at Pittsburgh at the end of the year 1784; at Louisville in February, 1785, and from there wrote to Father Carroll that he intended remaining in Kentucky. In March, 1785, he went to the Illinois country, his name being found in the Vincennes Register, March 30, 1785. Cf. SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 272. There are two letters to Carroll from Paul de St. Pierre, dated April, 1797, in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 8B-C3-4, in which the valiant and interesting missionary says that he is leaving for the French Dominions across the Mississippi. His last entry in the Baptismal Register of St. Genevieve is dated February 27, 1797.



. . . I have often expressed my desire and again repeated it of having an ordinary established in North America; because I apprehend that difficulties will with time increase in that business. You are the best judge of the present humour of the States in that respect, but according to their system of government as it has been here represented, the objections against the character of a bishop are more than against the character of a priest. The difference in the jurisdiction of a bishop in Ordinary and of an Apostolic Vic. bishop in *partibus*, is of such a nature as to be inconsiderable in the eyes of any heterodox government and also perhaps invisible to it. If the jurisdiction with which you are already invested be not obnoxious, its being decorated with episcopal character cannot surely cause it to be offensive while neither the insignia of it are publickly carried, nor publick Tribunals opposed, as I suppose them not to be at present.

If the foreign appointment of priests might necessarily be tolerated until a bishop be established in the country, the foreign appointment of one or two bishops can give less umbrage to the most jealous spirit of independence than a continual foreign appointment of many priests. I did not apprehend the difficulties against fixing a Bishop in the country, to originate from any contradiction of the government, because I suppose that all the Catholic subjects by having bishops of their own would be now closely consolidated in the whole body of the Republick. My concern chiefly arose from the humour of Rome, or rather from the spirit of the Propaganda Congregation which does not easily acquiesce to have bishops in Ordinary established in new countries, unless it be influenced by some powerful court. Without such interest and also well supported, it will be in vain to attempt the obtaining of an Ordinary for North America. If the States would not directly employ their authority in this business they might perhaps suffer its being promoted by the French Ministry, and if circumstances should to you, who reside in the country, show the superseding of each proposal to be prudential, why could not the character of bishop be quietly added to your present jurisdiction; it would undoubtedly be a much desired consolation to all. What I once said of your coming to Rome, was only in supposition of the proposal of an Ordinary being well supported and with security of the support effectually continuing with you here: otherwise labour and expense would be lost. The character of Bishop can be received with much less inconvenience and I much wish to accept of it. . . .<sup>43</sup>

Father Carroll had also the advantage of Charles Plowden's interpretation of the attitude of Rome towards the problem of completing hierarchical jurisdiction in the American Republic. In a letter from London, April 4, 1784, Plowden remarks that the:

<sup>43</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 8-H6, printed in the *Researches*, vol. xvii, pp. 5-7.



missioners in North America constitute the Catholic clergy of your country, and they are acknowledged, protected by the Government. No concordat by the Roman Court concerning the nomination of Bishop exists there, for the Catholic Clergy without allowance of a civil power could choose a Bishop among those agreeable of the ancient canons. I am persuaded that the Pope would not dare to refuse ordinary powers to such a Bishop-elect. All he would require would be a settling of a small revenue upon him. The example of Mohilow is quite in point. The Pope agreed to his nomination in spite of Spain, Propaganda, and the whole party.<sup>44</sup>

These words are an echo of a hint thrown out in a former letter (February 2, 1784) to the effect that Carroll's nomination as prefect-apostolic was hastened by Antonelli for fear the American Clergy would exercise their "right" and elect a bishop "over whom they [the Propaganda] would have no control." Plowden was persuaded that "the Pope could not refuse you the power if you were elected by your own colleagues."<sup>45</sup> Later, the same year (October 2, 1784), Plowden expressed the opinion of his friends in London that Carroll was to be elected a bishop at once, and he invited him to come to England to be consecrated.<sup>46</sup> When he learned that Carroll was averse to accepting a vicariate-apostolic, as existing in England, on account of the dependency on Propaganda, Plowden wrote on February 28, 1785:

Do, my dear friend, suffer yourself to be invested with the jurisdiction now offered. Be consecrated Bishop, establish the rising Church of America, fixing a regular and permanent system for its administration, regulate at least the beginnings of the Seminary for the Education of the Clergy and youth of America, and if you cannot in the meantime obtain the erection of an Episcopal See, at least you may then choose the proper coadjutor, who will be readily granted at Rome to so distant a country. Though your age should not require it, you may then retire if you please from the hurry of business.<sup>47</sup>

Charles Plowden was something of a gossip in his own way, but his rumours are valuable today as showing us the various aspects of these critical years in American Catholic life. Carroll

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<sup>44</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 6-J1.

<sup>45</sup> *L.c.*, Case 6-J1.

<sup>46</sup> *L.c.*, Case 6-J5.

<sup>47</sup> *L.c.*, Case 6-J6.

knew from Thorpe's letter that Antonelli had been very much upset over a diatribe against the American clergy written by Father Smyth and how difficult it was for Thorpe to dissuade the old cardinal from the belief that the American ex-Jesuits were contemplating a restoration of the Society in spite of Rome. Thorpe told Plowden in 1787 that a plot was on foot to send an Irish Dominican to America as a sort of legate from Propaganda. "The Irish friars of Rome," he writes, "are very sure to obtain this post, and the Dominicans are in favour with Antonelli and Borgia."<sup>48</sup> Father Thorpe is anxious for Carroll to accept anything in order to prevent this intrusion into the American Church, and Plowden writes (July 29, 1787), "perhaps his best reason is that several Irish friars for whom Ireland has not mitres enough are actually trying to obtain from Propaganda episcopal authority and dignity in North America."<sup>49</sup> Among those he suspects was the Prior of San Clemente, Dr. Concanen. But Plowden wisely adds that this suspicion on Thorpe's part is groundless, because with so many countries eager for an alliance with the new Republic, Propaganda would not run the risk of offending the American Congress by such an appointment. "I ought to have mentioned," he says, "that Thayer, who is now in Holy Orders at Paris, is represented by his French friends as the man to be most proper of all others to be sent as Bishop into America."<sup>50</sup>

The two obstacles to the establishment of the hierarchy—Antonelli's fears of a restoration of the Society and the fears of the ex-Jesuit American clergy that such an establishment would injure the chances of a restoration, were gradually overcome, and the way was made free for Carroll's election. Meanwhile, as we shall see in the next chapter, Father John Carroll needed supreme courage during these critical years (1784-1789) for the task imposed upon him by the Holy See. The facilities of communication were meagre, and correspondence was slow and unsatisfactory. Problems requiring the guidance of superiors were changed beyond recognition when, after months of delay, the official direction from Rome reached the prefect-apostolic

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<sup>48</sup> *L.c.*, Case 6-K2.

<sup>49</sup> *L.c.*, Case 6-K3.

<sup>50</sup> *L.c.*, Case 6-K3.

in Baltimore. The Church in this country was made up of small groups, disassociated and of varying characteristics. Ecclesiastical discipline, so vital to church progress, was considerably handicapped by the presbyterian form of government provided by Propaganda, and with hardly any exception the newcomers among the missionaries chafed and rebelled even under the light yoke the prefectship placed upon them. The Church ran the same risk as the Government—the tragedy of self-determined groups unwilling to combine under one head. What was paramount was the necessity of a bishop, and it is in this light that these critical years and, in consequence, Carroll's noble efforts at union must be viewed. The prefect-apostolic was much cheered by Father Thorpe's letter of December 2, 1786, which assured him that the Holy See would soon bestow upon the American Church the more thorough system of an established hierarchy. It was for this reason that Father Thorpe had advised Carroll to come at once to Rome to lay the whole question in person before the Pope.

Meanwhile, as was inevitable in a religious society so rigidly organized as the Catholic Church, the absence of episcopal power, dignity, and jurisdiction gave rise to disorders in practically every group of the faithful in the new Republic. It was about this time, the beginning of the year 1787, that Father Carroll left his mother's home in Rock Creek and came to Baltimore to reside at St. Peter's Rectory. There, from every part of the country, letters came to him by courier and by travelling merchants, as well as through the imperfect postal system, telling him of the growing disorders within his jurisdiction.

CHAPTER XVI  
RECONSTRUCTION AND CHURCH DISCIPLINE  
(1785-1790)

In an historical sketch of the difficulties which faced Carroll on the morrow of his Visitation, in the handwriting of Archbishop Maréchal, we are told that "the grand misfortune of the Catholic Church in the United States is that there is no fixed Plan of Discipline for the administration of the Temporal belonging to each Congregation."<sup>1</sup> Practically speaking, all the difficulties of these critical years centre around the problem of the lay trustee system, and in practically all cases at the heart of the evil was an unruly cleric.

The first public act of disobedience to Father Carroll's authority occurred in New York City after his return to Rock Creek, in December, 1785. Soon after Father Whelan had been given temporary faculties by the prefect-apostolic, another priest of the same order, and a fellow-countryman, the Rev. Andrew Nugent, arrived. Owing to the indefiniteness in the matter of his jurisdiction, Carroll would not at first permit Father Nugent to exercise any parochial rights; when he learnt, however, from Father Thorpe, that there was no restriction upon his powers, he gave Father Nugent permission to act as assistant pastor of the New York congregation.<sup>2</sup> Harmony existed but a short time; within a month Father Nugent had created a faction in his own favour among the trustees, with the result that Father Whelan was requested by them to resign and to leave the city. Father Farmer had hinted at the reason to Carroll, in his letter of November 8, 1784, in which he tells the Prefect that the Catholics in New York were expecting another priest, "who is said to be a great preacher (which, alas! is all that some want

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<sup>1</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case II-Q3.

<sup>2</sup> BAYLEY, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59.

who never frequent the Holy Sacraments). He is a confrere to Mr. Whelan."<sup>3</sup> Father Carroll's opinion of Whelan appears to have been a favourable one. In a letter to Plowden, December 15, 1785, he speaks of him as a zealous, pious and humble man: "He is not indeed so learned or so good a preacher as I could wish, which mortifies his congregation, as at New York, and most other places in America, the different sectaries have scarce any other test to judge of a clergyman than his talents for preaching, and our Irish congregations, such as New York, follow the same rule."<sup>4</sup> Father Nugent satisfied his Irish congregation in this regard, but, unfortunately, his talents in that line, as has so often proved to be the case in clerical history, were linked with a spirit of egoism and insubordination. It may well be, though no evidence is at hand to prove it, that Father Whelan, sensitive over his own deficiency in preaching ability, had written to his Capuchin superiors in Ireland suggesting that some one with such powers be sent to New York. Before the middle of December, 1785, those who remained loyal to Father Whelan were in open conflict with the Nugent faction. On December 18, two adherents of Nugent, with his connivance, seized the collection taken up at Mass; and with money as the cause, the first schism in the American Church became a reality.

Father Farmer, as vicar of the prefect-apostolic, had allowed Father Valinière, then in New York, to attend to the French and Canadian Catholics, and the former "rebel" sent him occasional information on the Capuchins' quarrel. Father Farmer writes on December 20, 1785, to Carroll, saying that Father Whelan had disgusted a good many by his imprudence and self-interestedness. "I am afraid," he adds, "nothing else brought those Fathers [Whelan and Nugent] over here, when nobody sent for them: and otherwise their education in such small convents was not calculated for the American missions."<sup>5</sup> With this letter was enclosed one from Whelan to Father Carroll, filled with complaints against his fellow Capuchin. The antipathy between the two priests was soon known to the public, and the disagree-

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<sup>3</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 3-K1; cf. *United States Catholic Miscellany*, vol. vi, p. 103.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.



able contest threatened to disrupt the little congregation completely. The trustees now determined to ignore Father Whelan altogether, and thus force Father Farmer or the prefect to remove him. They even threatened to have recourse to legal means to rid themselves of him.<sup>6</sup> From Christmas, 1785, they refused to pay him any salary. In January, Father Carroll sent three letters to the participants in the schism. To Nugent he wrote on January 17, 1786, urging him to make peace with his brother-priest. The same message he sent to Father Whelan on January 18th. The following week, on January 25th, Carroll wrote a strong protest to the trustees against their assumption of authority in the Church:

*R. C. [Rock Creek] near Georgetown, Jan. 25, 1786.*

*Gentlemen:*

I was honoured yesterday at the same time with your letters of Dec. 22, 1785, and January 11, 1786. You did me justice in supposing that the former was delayed on its way or had miscarried; for certainly I should not have failed in my duty of immediately answering so respectable a part of the congregation. You will however readily conceive that this is not an easy nor, allow me to say, a very agreeable office in the present instance. One circumstance indeed gives me comfort: you profess to have no other views than for the service and credit of religion; and as I make it my endeavour to be influenced solely by the same motive, I trust that proposing to ourselves the same end we shall likewise agree in the means of obtaining it.

The first advices of any disturbances among you, were transmitted to me in letters from Messrs. Whelan and Nugent which I answered on the 17th and 18th inst. Both these gentlemen represented the steps taken as extreme and improper. I spoke to them therefore in the same manner in my answers, and the more freely as neither of them mentioned the name of one single person concerned. Having now received a communication of your sentiments, I shall likewise deliver mine with the respect due to your representations, and with the freedom and plainness becoming the responsible and burdensome office, of which I feel myself every day more unworthy, in proportion as the duties and the weight of it grow upon me.

But I must first state to you the previous information I had received: 1st. that the trustees denied having agreed to the articles, of which I left a copy with Mr. Whelan; and which to my best apprehension had been adopted at the meeting I had the honour of having with those gentlemen. 2d, that an opinion was formed and propagated of the congregation having a right not only to choose such a parish priest as is agreeable to

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<sup>6</sup> SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 276.

them, but discharging him at pleasure, and that after such election, the bishop or other ecclesiastical superior cannot hinder him from exercising the usual function. 3dly, that two of the congregation (by whose orders I am not informed) on Sunday, December 18th, after Divine Service and in the face of all present in the chapel, seized in a tumultuary manner and kept possession of the collection then made. The first part of this intelligence shocked me very much both because it reflected on my veracity which in this instance I will steadily assert and because I considered the matters then agreed on as right in point of justice as the renewal of confidence, and foundation of future union. The next point of intelligence was still more important. *If ever the principles then laid down should become predominant, the unity and catholicity of our Church would be at an end*; and it would be formed into distinct and independent societies, nearly in the same manner as the congregational Presbyterians of our neighboring New England States. A zealous clergyman performing his duty courageously and without respect of persons would be always liable to be the victim of his earnest endeavours to stop the progress of vice and evil example, and others more complying with the passions of some principal persons of the congregation would be substituted in his room; and if the ecclesiastical superior has no control in these instances, I will refer to your own judgment what the consequence may be. The great source of misconception in this matter is that an idea appears to be taken both by you and Mr. Whelan that the officiating clergyman at New York is a parish priest, whereas there is yet no such office in the United States. The hierarchy of our American Church not being yet constituted; no parishes are formed, and the clergy coming to the assistance of the faithful, are but voluntary labourers in the vineyard of Christ, not vested with ordinary jurisdiction annexed to their office, but receiving it as a delegated and extra-hierarchical commission. Wherever parishes are established no doubt, a proper regard (and such as is suitable [?] to our governments) will be had to rights of the congregation in the mode of election and representation; and even now I shall ever pay to their wishes every deference consistent with the general welfare of religion: of which I hope to give you proof in the sequel of this letter, for I could not but fear, that a step so violent, at such a time and place, and probably in the presence of other religionists would breed disunion among yourselves and make a very disadvantageous impression, to the prejudice of our Catholic cause, soon after the first introduction of public worship into your city.

I now return to the contents of your letters, and observe that after stating some censurable instances of Mr. Whelan's conduct, you desire me to remove him, and imply a desire that Mr. Nugent, as being very acceptable, may succeed to his office. I can assure you, Gentlemen, that I have a very advantageous opinion of Mr. Nugent's abilities, and he showed me very good testimonials of his zeal and virtue. I repeatedly told him as I did to many of yourselves, that nothing but my own want of sufficient authority prevented me from giving him every power requi-

site for the exercise of his ministry. I hoped before this to have the restriction of my authority removed, but as it is not, it remains still out of my power to employ him agreeably to your and my desires. If I am ever able to do it, I will certainly remember my assurances to him. But in the mean time what can I do? Can I revoke Mr. Whelan's faculties and leave so great a congregation without assistance? Can I deprive him, when neither his morals, his orthodoxy, or his assiduity have been impeached? especially while I am uncertain whether his removal be desired by a majority of the congregation? For I have received assurance very much to the contrary. But even if a considerable part are still attached to him, would the great object of unanimity be obtained by his removal? Would not his adherents consider Mr. Nugent as coming in upon the ruins of his predecessor and consequently would they not keep alive the spirit of discord? Upon these considerations I have taken a resolution, which will I hope meet your wishes, as well as every part of the congregation. As soon as I am at liberty to grant them, Mr. Nugent shall have powers from me to act as your joint-chaplain; for the idea of parish-priest is not admissible. He has repeatedly assured me he never will accept of an appointment to the exclusion of his brother: in his letter he says, a sufficient maintenance of both may be maintained. In the mean time he has full authority to announce the word of God, and I promise myself he will do it with effect, especially by including the great duty of charity and unanimity. He and Mr. Whelan will concur in recommending this characteristic virtue of christianity, by their examples as well as advice. Educated in the same school of religion, and connected by special ties to the same order, they will assist each other in the work of the ministry and every part of the congregation will have it in their power to apply to him of the two, in whom they have the greatest confidence. I must not omit taking notice of Mr. Whelan's address to the congregation inclosed in your last. I greatly disapprove it, and shall so inform him. When I wrote the letter to which he refers, I had heard nothing from New York concerning your uneasiness. I lamented that my hands being still tied, I was prevented from giving full employment to Mr. Nugent's zeal; and I must add, for Mr. La Valinière's credit, that when I declined granting him leave to administer the Sacraments to the Canadian refugees, it was for the same reason, because I had no power to do it. Otherwise I have such a conviction of his many qualities, that I should gladly have indulged the wishes of those good people who solicited [this power] and of this I beg to inform him.

[At the close?] of your last letter you make some mention of eventually having recourse to legal means to rid yourselves of Mr. Whelan. This insinuation makes me very unhappy. I cannot tell what assistance the laws might give you; but allow me to say that you can take no step so fatal to that respectability, in which as a religious Society you wish to stand, or more prejudicial to the Catholic cause. I must therefore entreat you to decline a design so pernicious to all your prospects; and protesting against measures so extreme, I explicitly declare, that no

clergyman, be he who he may, shall receive any spiritual powers from me who shall advise or countenance so unnecessary. . . .<sup>7</sup>

The prefect warned the trustees that there were no valid reasons for withdrawing faculties from Father Whelan and that if the Capuchin left the city, they would be without a pastor, since Propaganda had not yet replied officially to Carroll regarding the extent of his jurisdiction;<sup>8</sup> moreover, he would not appoint Nugent in Father Whelan's place. As to their threat of having recourse to the law, Father Carroll left them under no misapprehension of his action in case they should take a step so fatal to that respectability on which as a religious society they wished to stand and so prejudicial to Catholic interests. An insight into the temper of the trustees is to be seen, in Father Farmer's letter of January 29, 1786, to Carroll. It would seem that Dennis McReady, one of the trustees, had constituted himself the leader of the Nugent faction, and that Father Farmer had corresponded with him in an effort to bring peace to the distracted congregation. The contest had become so bitter that the trustees who sided with Nugent threatened to close the church. Father Farmer warned McReady that the prefect had not the power to constitute Father Nugent pastor of the parish, but the rebellious priest had so far won the confidence of the administrators of the church that Father Whelan saw there was nothing left for him to do but to leave the city. He wrote to Father Farmer at the end of January that he was tired of the contest and that he was anxious to leave New York, if the prefect would provide another place for him, with competent maintenance.<sup>9</sup> Without waiting for an answer, Father Whelan departed from the city on February 12, and went to join his brother, a physician, who had a farm about forty-five miles beyond Albany. He intended to stay away until Easter. Father Farmer then gave temporary parochial powers to Father La Valinière. The great-

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<sup>7</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9-M4; printed in the *Researches*, vol. xvii, pp. 1-4; cf. SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 276.

<sup>8</sup> HUGHES (*op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, p. 636) states that Carroll received Antonelli's letter of July 23, 1785, granting him ampler faculties and defining the limits of his powers, in December, 1785. Carroll says in his letter of August 18, 1786, that he received Antonelli's letter on March 27, 1786.

<sup>9</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9-M5; cf. *United States Catholic Magazine*, vol. vi, p. 147.

est difficulty in giving approval to Nugent, Father Farmer says in his letter of March 6, 1786, to the prefect, "is the arbitrary and ungenerous manner with which they forced poor Father Whelan to depart, who, though he was not very learned, yet was ready to ask and take advice, which, I believe, is not the quality of the former [Nugent]." <sup>10</sup> A quarrel such as this may seem at this distance of too paltry a domestic nature to find a place in the Life of Carroll; but there was an important juridic principle at stake, and to have allowed the trustees the slightest ground for the belief that they could choose for themselves whatever pastor was pleasing to them, whether or not approved by Carroll or by his vicar, Father Farmer, would have had fatal consequences in the American Church. The trustee evil in the non-German congregations, which was to haunt the Church in the United States down to the time of Archbishop Hughes, and of which the New York schism is the first evidence, has sometimes been excused or palliated on the score that it was the European system of ecclesiastical administration. This explanation sees erroneously a similarity between the system of *marguilliers*, so common in French parishes, and the trustees. What was at the bottom of the evil was the delay on the part of the officials of Propaganda in establishing an authority which all priests and people would have been ready to accept.

Father La Valinière decided also to resume his wanderings, and so the situation, from the ecclesiastical standpoint had gone from bad to worse. Nugent's exercise of parochial rights entailed *ipso facto* suspension, and in the loosely-constructed system of church government under the archipresbyterate of Carroll, the trustees might easily have succeeded in their design of setting up an independent Church if a break had not occurred between themselves and the recalcitrants.

Father Farmer reported to Carroll on April 13, 1786, that dissension had arisen on the matter of Nugent's salary, and that the trustees had given him the alternative of accepting the amount they offered, or of leaving the city. By this time Nugent's insubordination had brought him within the danger of excommunication. Father Carroll probably foresaw this eventuality,

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 147-148.



for on March 13, 1786, he gave a full description of the schism to the Cardinal-Prefect of Propaganda, leaving it to Antonelli's judgment whether Whelan was to be given faculties and entrusted with the congregation in New York City. In the course of this he says:

I had already done so, and I explained my reasons for doing so, in my letter of February 27, 1785. He was invited by the Catholics there to stay with them, and I hoped for great fruits from his zeal; indeed he spared no pains to make such fruits possible. About the end of autumn, however, another priest of his order and race, Father Andrew Nugent, came to New York from Ireland, and little by little, alienated the hearts of the Catholics from Father Maurice. The latter thought it best to leave the city and to labour elsewhere than in the metropolis of the United States. Father Nugent, however, although a better man for the post (*quamvis videatur illi stationi opportunior*), did not have the approbation of the Sacred Congregation. Hence, either the faithful would be bereft of all spiritual care, or I would be compelled to run the risk of exceeding the limits of my authority. In these circumstances, having read over the theologians on the question, I finally decided that the mind of the Church was to provide for the care of souls and that my authority was valueless, if I could not act in such a danger. Hence I gave faculties to Father Nugent, for preaching the Word of God, administering the sacraments of baptism and matrimony, and the rest, whenever it was necessary. I acted thus, until I should receive an answer from Your Eminence to the questions I put in my letter [February 27, 1785]; and as if the faculties granted me had already been amplified.<sup>11</sup>

Two weeks later the turning point in Carroll's administration came, for on March 27, 1786, he received Antonelli's letter of July 23, 1785, granting him an ampler set of faculties and expressing regret that any misunderstanding on the extent of his jurisdiction had arisen. This important document has never been published before, and it is here given in full:

July 23. 1785.

To the Reverend John Carroll,  
Maryland,

What your Lordship well set forth concerning the condition of the orthodox religion in the thirteen United States of America in letters

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<sup>11</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite*, vol. 876, no. 13. It is to be noted, however, that this letter remained unsent until the following August, when Carroll adds a page or two (August 18, 1786), advising Antonelli that he had received the important letter of July 23, 1785, on March 27, 1786.

dated the 27th of February and 1st of March has been very pleasing to our Holy Father and this Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith. We were indeed glad to learn that the faithful there, although some abuses have crept in among them, which can be easily eradicated by the care of pastors, are notwithstanding this, steadfast and firm in the faith, and that the foundations of religion can be laid so firmly in those American states that the hope arises that some day it will be a most flourishing portion of the vineyard of the Lord. That information was also very pleasing, to the effect that Catholics enjoy the free exercise of their religion, especially in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, where they enjoy the same rights as other citizens. Therefore while we offer the highest thanks to God, the Father of Mercies, we do not neglect to express our great good will towards your Lordship, who has applied all zeal and effort to the spiritual profit of the same faithful; in the hope that under your guidance things Catholic will increase continually, more and more. The Sacred Congregation also decided, as we have told you in previous letters, to appoint meanwhile in those thirteen United States of America a vicar apostolic with the title and character of bishop, and to confer this dignity first upon your Lordship. But if you think that it is expedient, and that it will be more in accordance with the constitution of that Republic for the missionaries themselves, at least at first, to recommend some one to the Sacred Congregation, who might be elevated to the office of vicar apostolic, the Sacred Congregation will not cease to perform what you decide to be the more suitable. Of course, for the future, in order that an appointment of this kind may result favourably, it will be no embarrassment to the Sacred Congregation if those missionaries recommend to the Sacred Congregation two or three of the more worthy ones, from whom it will not decline to select him who shall seem to excel most in virtue and worth. In the meantime, however, Your Lordship will continue to fill the office of superior, for since you yourself have shown that we ought not to appoint a vicar apostolic, before provision is made for proper ministers of the sanctuary, and for the fitting maintenance of a bishop, and since it has been made known from another source that it is well to postpone this matter a little, we will reserve the appointment of a vicar apostolic for a suitable time regarding which we expect to be informed by you. But in order that, while you are superior, every risk of displeasure may be removed from the fact that the superior of those missions can appoint no workers except whom this Sacred Congregation has approved, I have seen to it that a new copy of faculties be enclosed for you, in which this usual clause has been removed, and the power has been granted you of selecting workers, whom you shall judge suitable in the Lord. . . . .

As regards the sending of young men to the college of this city, the task of furnishing the money necessary for their voyage has been assigned to the Apostolic Nuncio at Paris. It is my wish therefore that you prepare the two young men whom you promise, of preëminent mind and

strong constitution, in order that finally they may become beneficial workers for that Catholic flock, and, if you can not arrange at least for their coming to the shores of France at their own expense, funds will be supplied by the same Apostolic Nuncio out of the treasury of the Sacred Congregation. Now, you will learn from the enclosed copy what the form of the oath is which is customarily taken by our students, and you will see that the most important part of the oath rests on this, that every student return to his own country to attend to the apostolic service, and that they inform the Sacred Congregation about that situation. If, however, you find anything which in the present state of things could cause displeasure, we are not unwilling to adjust the same formula of the oath for the benefit of the students of those regions, according as shall seem to be the more expedient. On this matter, it shall be your duty to inform us in due time.

Coming now to the faculties which you requested, our Holy Father has graciously granted your Lordship the faculty of dispensing in the case of Henry Spalding and Mary Spalding, in the second degree of consanguinity, and also in the impediment of spiritual affinity, and of revalidating their marriage, after the conditions have been kept which are set forth in the adjoined document. Furthermore, that you may look out for other needs of the flock committed to your care, His Holiness has granted you another faculty, of dispensing in the second degree of consanguinity and affinity for thirty cases, provided it in no way concerns the first degree, and likewise of dispensing from the unlawful bond for the same number of cases in the first degree of affinity, whether by the direct or collateral line, in such a way as you will observe from the enclosed documents, all the clauses and conditions of which it shall be your duty to keep strictly. Another faculty is adjoined to these, namely of celebrating Mass for three hours after mid-day, whenever as you have explained the spiritual need of that people required it. From this you will well understand how great is the solicitude of His Holiness and of this Sacred Congregation for the increase of that mission, and, trusting that your Lordship will abundantly fulfil our expectation, I pray God that He grant you all prosperity and peace.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Lettere*, vol. 246, ff. 437-438. SHEA mentions this letter (*op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 273), and HUGHES, (*op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, p. 635) gives a paragraph, incorrectly transcribed, from its pages. The original is as follows: D. Joanni Carroll.—Marilandiam.

23 Julii 1785.

Quae de statu orthodoxae religionis in tredecim Confederatae Americanae provinciis Dominatio Tua luculenter exposuit per literas datas de 27 Februarii, et 1 Martii pr. el., ea Sanctissimo Domino Nostro, et Sacrae huic Congregationi de Propaganda Fide pergrata acciderunt. Lubenter quidem accepimus fideles istos, licet aliqui inter eos abusus irrepererint, qui pastorum sollicitudine facile divelli poterunt, stabiles tamen esse, atque constantes in fide, ac tam firma religionis fundamenta in Americanis istis provinciis jaci posse, ut spes affluat florentissimam vineae Domini partem aliquando futuram. Illud etiam accessit perjucundum, scilicet catholicos ipsos libero frui religionis exercitio, potissimum vero in Pensilvania, Delawaria, Marilandia et Virginia,

The status of the New York congregation was not changed by this letter, and Nugent was permitted to continue as temporary pastor of the parish; but the schism was far from being ended. From May until August, 1786, Father Carroll made a second Visitation of his prefecture, and on August 18, 1786, he completed his letter of March 13, telling Antonelli that the delay in his reply was due to the fact that he had been journeying continuously for four months (*quod Emin. Tuae literis tam tarde rescripserim, in causa fuit continua per quatuor menses itinerum et occupationum molestia*). He administered the Sacrament of Confirmation wherever he went and the number of the faithful who came to receive the Sacrament had much encouraged him. It was during this second Visitation that Father Carroll realized the number of Catholics to be even far greater than he had mentioned in his earlier letters (*Hac occasione video multo maiorem esse Catholicorum numerum, quam prioribus litteris memora-*

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ubi eodem, ac ceteri cives, jure utuntur. Quare dum Deo Patri Misericordiarum plurimas agimus gratias, Dominationi tuae quae omne studium atque operam contulit ad spiritualem eorundem fidelium utilitatem, pergratam nostram voluntatem testari non desumus, fore sperantes, ut res catholica sub tuo regimine magis magisque deinceps capiat incrementum. Statuit etiam Sacra Congregatio, ut in praecedentibus litteris tibi declaravimus, vicarium apostolicum cum titulo et characterē episcopali in tredecim istis Confederatae Americae provinciis interim praeficere, eamque dignitatem Dominationi Tuae primum conferre. Si vero magis expedire et istius reipublicae constitutioni acceptius fore putaveris, ut missionarii ipsi aliquem vel prima vice S. Congregationi commendent, qui ad vicarii apostolici munus provehatur, Sacra Congregatio id praestare non desinet, quod opportunius fore judicaveris. Certe in posterum, ut accepta evadat huiusmodi designatio, nulla erit Sacrae Congregationi difficultas, ut missionarii isti duos vel tres ex iis digniores Sacrae Congregationi commendent, ex quibus illum decernere non recusabit, qui virtute ac meritis magis excellere videbitur. Interim vero Dominatio Tua superioris munus exercere perget, nam cum ipse declaraveris, non prius oportere vicarium apostolicum constituere, quam de idoneis sanctuarii ministris, et de decenti episcopi sustentatione provideatur, et aliunde significatum fuerit, id esse opportunum, ut negotium istud paulo adhuc protrahatur, nos vicarii apostolici designationem congruo tempori reservabimus, de quo etiam abs Te certiores fieri expectamus. Ut autem Te superiore, omne avertatur offensionis periculum ex eo, quod superior istarum missionum nullos possit designare operarios, nisi quos Sacra haec Congregatio adprobarit, novum tibi inserendum curavi facultatum exemplar, in quo sublata est consueta haec clausula, tibi quae potestas facta eligendi operarios, quos idoneos in Domino judicaveris.

Quod vero attinet ad juvenes ad collegium hoc Urbanum mittendos, demandatum est Nuntio Apostolico Parisiensi munus suppeditandae pecuniae, quae opus erit pro illorum itinere. Expedias igitur cupio juvenes duos, quos polliceris, praestantis ingenii, firmaeque valetudinis, ut proficui aliquando evadant catholico isti gregi operarii, et si illud assequi non poteris, ut viam suis sumptibus aggreddiantur saltem ad Galliae littora, supplebitur per eundem D. Nuntium ex aerario Sacrae Congregationis. Quae autem sit formula jura-



*veram*).<sup>13</sup> Shea says that the troubled state of the Church in New York was described by Carroll before the deputies of the Second General Chapter in November, 1786; but there is no mention of the matter in the proceedings as published by Hughes.<sup>14</sup> There is no doubt, however, that the scandalous action of Nugent was known to all the clergy, and that it had an effect in retarding the growing opposition to the proposed bishopric. The petition for a bishop makes mention of the necessity for an authority which could effectually control "any men of indocile mind" among the clergy, who might be "chafing under ecclesiastical discipline"; and there is more than a hint in the reference to the fact that wherever this rebellious spirit was in evidence, it was caused by the inability of some to understand that they could be bound to obey the authority of a simple priest.

Before the opening of the Second General Chapter of the Clergy on November 13, 1786, a scene of unusual brilliance in church affairs had taken place in New York City, and from the records which are extant, there were many aspects of the dedication of St. Peter's Church, on November 4, 1786, which tended

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menti, quod a nostris alumni praestari solet, ex inserto exemplo noveris, atque prospicias, potissimam juramenti partem in eo versari, ut in suam quique provinciam alumni revertantur apostolico ministerio operam daturi, et S. Congregationem de statu suo certiores faciant. Si quid tamen invenies, quod in praesentibus rerum circumstantiis displicere possit, eandem juramenti formulam pro alumni istarum regionum accommodare non recusamus, prout magis expedire videbitur, de quo tuum erit nos opportune commonefacere.

Veniens nunc ad facultates quas postulasti, Sanctissimus Dominus Noster Dominationi Tuae benigne concessit facultatem dispensandi cum Henrico Spalding, et Maria Spalding in secundo consanguinitatis gradu, ac super impedimento compaternitatis; eorumque matrimonium, servatis conditionibus, quae in adnexo documento expressae sunt, revalidandi. Insuper, ut aliis gregis tibi commissi necessitatibus prospicias, Sanctitas Sua aliam tibi communicavit facultatem dispensandi in secundo consanguinitatis et affinitatis gradu, dummodo nullo modo attingat primum, pro casibus triginta, ac pariter dispensandi pro totidem vicibus in primo gradu affinitatis ex copula illicita, sive per lineam rectam, sive per collateralem, prout ex insertis documentis perspicias, quorum tuum erit omnes clausulas et conditiones accurate servare. Alia his adnectitur celebrandi scilicet per tres horas post meridiem, quando quidem id exigere spirituale istius populi necessitatem exposuisti. Ex hoc probe intelliges, quanta sit Sanctitatis Suae et Sacrae huius Congregationis sollicitudo pro istius missionis incremento, ac fore confidens, ut Dominatio Tua expectationi nostrae cumulate respondeat, Deum precor, ut eidem fausta ac pacata omnia concedat.

<sup>13</sup> As in note 11. About this time (January 2, 1786) de Marbois, the French Chargé d'affaires, wrote to Vergennes describing the state of the Church in the city, and told the Prime Minister that he had opposed La Valinière's purchase of a disused Protestant church there (SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 283).

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 326.



to soften the harsh impression the schism had created. The chief benefactor to the first Catholic Church in New York City was King Charles III of Spain, who gave one thousand dollars (*pesos*) to the project. The Spanish Minister at New York, Diego de Gardoqui, had written to the Prime Minister, Florida-Blanca, on September 3, 1785, supplementing a letter from the trustees to the King, and the King's grant is acknowledged in Gardoqui's letter of June 18, 1786. On June 20, 1786, the trustees sent the following letter of acknowledgment and of thanks to Gardoqui:

The attention and friendship with which Your Excellency has had the kindness to manifest the interest which you take in protecting our congregation since your arrival in this State imposes on us the deep obligation of offering to Your Excellency our most sincere and cordial thanks, and reminding you once more how hopeful we are that Your Excellency continue those favours. Your Excellency will kindly allow us to beg you to inform His Catholic Majesty how deeply obliged we feel to him and how great a stimulus it will be to our faith, since His Majesty has so graciously seen fit to grant us his Royal protection, and the precious help which his well-known liberality has had the kindness to send us, our only means of erecting the Church of St. Peter in this city, in which, when finished, we will take the liberty of erecting a tribune in the most distinguished place and of reserving it for His Majesty's use.

The infancy of our congregation is indispensably the reason why its funds are so reduced, and the meagreness of our means the cause of our being obliged to have recourse to the liberality of the powerful and well disposed servants of His Majesty, in order to complete the erection of our church, to which purpose we have devised a plan (which we hope will merit the approval and consent of Your Excellency) of appointing a priest to go through Vera Cruz and Mexico City and return *via* Havana. [In order to take up collections there.]

Our confidence in this measure is very great for we judge it to be the only means of enabling us to continue our enterprise of promoting and adding respect and credit to our faith and Republic.

Therefore we beseech Your Excellency to deign to favour this enterprise with your consent and protection, because with them we are sure of success, and in all gratitude we will pray to God that the life of His Majesty and that of Your Excellency be prolonged for many years to come.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> *Archives of Simancas, Archivo General, Estado*, leg. 3886, no. 17. A copy of this and of the other letters given in the text is in the *Georgetown College Archives, Shea Collection*, no. 38, envelope 13. The letters were printed in the *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. i, pp. 71-77. Cf. *An Early Page in the Catholic History of New York*, in the *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. i, pp. 68ss.

On October 26, 1786, the trustees again wrote to the Spanish Minister, telling him that the Church was nearly completed and that arrangements had been made to celebrate the first Mass in the church, on the King's feast day, the Feast of St. Charles Borromeo, November fourth. Gardoqui's letter to Floridablanca, dated New York, November 7, 1786, describes the ceremonies which took place. Solemn High Mass was celebrated by Father Nugent, assisted by the chaplains of the French and Spanish embassies, and Gardoqui sat in a special tribune within the sanctuary. A banquet followed the religious ceremonies, and appropriate toasts were given as we read in his letter of November 7, 1786:

The Roman Catholic Congregation of this city, wishing to give to His Catholic Majesty the most evident proof of gratitude for the great protection and generous help with which the piety of His Majesty has seen fit to honour it, for the erection of its new church, has resolved to adorn it in the most fitting manner and also that the first Mass be celebrated the fourth of this month, which is the "Saint's Day" of His Majesty and of the Prince of Asturias.

For this end it besought the *Chargé d'affaires*, Don Diego de Gardoqui, to attend this ceremony with all his family, and although the church has not been finished, by means of doubling the work of construction the ceremony was performed, and the first Mass was said by the parish priest, Mr. Nugent, assisted by the chaplains of the House of Spain and France, at which was present the said *Chargé d'affaires* with all his family. The Congregation assigned him a place of distinction, which we are assured will be reserved for the Ministers or Representatives of His Majesty in this city.

Great was the joy of the faithful on this occasion, and the parish priest made good use of it, because when the Mass was ended he gave a very Christian exhortation, reminding them of their obligation of giving thanks to the Almighty and of praying for the health and happiness of the Catholic King and the Royal Family. When the ceremony was over, Señor Gardoqui went back to his home to celebrate that memorable day and gave a splendid banquet in honor of the President, the members and secretaries of the Congress, the Governor of the State, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, of War, of Domestic Affairs, the Ministers and Foreign Consuls, and other persons of distinction.

After the banquet the *Chargé d'affaires* gave the following toasts arranged according to the circumstances and customs of the country:

1. To the King of Spain and the Royal Family.
2. To the Sovereigns of the House of Bourbon.
3. To the United States of America.

4. To the Secretaries of His Catholic Majesty.
5. To General Washington.
6. To the Viceroy, Count of Galvez.
7. To the Count of Rochambeau.
8. To a lasting and close friendship between His Catholic Majesty and the United States of America.
9. To the army now honorably returning to the plow, that it may enjoy in peace and abundance the fruits of the earth.
10. That the subjects always recognize the worth of their good Sovereigns and love them.
11. That the virtues and crown of His Catholic Majesty be continued to all his descendants.
12. For the fidelity of good government in all nations.
13. For the prosperity, health, and long life of the August Catholic King and that of the invited guests.

The guests showed the greatest satisfaction and joy and all ended with the best cheer.

Father John Carroll whom Gardoqui styles "Obispo Católico de este continente," had been invited to attend, but the letter reached him too late to make the journey. Carroll's reply, dated November 14, 1786, is as follows:

Sir:

The munificence of His Catholic Majesty and the noble favours which he has seen fit to grant to the church of New York, united with my gratitude and natural attachment, cause me to take the honor of offering to Your Excellency (as representative of that great Prince) the due tribute of my gratefulness; and if it is not too daring a presumption I would go so far as to beg Your Excellency to convey the sincerest expression of gratitude and respectful veneration which dominates them; and, to tell the truth, the gift of His Catholic Majesty not only will live in posterity by the exercise of our religion, but will be the foundation for other establishments of the same nature.

I hope from the constant prayers of those who enjoy the benefit of the bounty of his Majesty that this great act will merit that Heaven pour down its benedictions on His Catholic Majesty, his posterity and his kingdom; and if to these sentiments of most profound gratitude towards the generous kindness of His Majesty be united the vivid remembrance of the person through whom the effect of the same has been received, then I humbly beg Your Excellency to be sure that I shall never forget how much our faith owes to Your Excellency's active and potent recommendation.

The untoward event which has prevented me from receiving in time the invitation with which I was honoured by the Congregation for St. Charles' Day was deeply regretted by me because it deprived me of the

opportunity of expressing to Your Excellency the great respect and esteem with which I have the honor of being the most obedient and humble servant of Your Excellency,

J. CARROLL

Father Carroll feared at the time that there might be some "malevolent people, eager to misrepresent every action of an ex-Jesuit," and he would not be surprised "to hear that my non-attendance was the effect of disrespect to his Catholic majesty."<sup>16</sup>

The death of Father Farmer on August 17, 1786, deprived the prefect-apostolic of a firm vice-gerent in controlling the New York situation, and when the last phase of the schism developed in the following year, Father Carroll had no alternative but to set out in person for the American metropolis. Carroll reported to Antonelli on July 2, 1787, that religious affairs in New York were prospering,<sup>17</sup> and Antonelli, in replying on August 8, 1787, to Carroll's letters of March 13-August 18, 1786, and January 12, 1787, expressed his consolation on hearing that the church in New York city had been opened for services. He gave Carroll the faculty of blessing the new church with solemn benediction, and even of sub-delegating another priest to do so. The faculty of consecrating churches was given rarely, he adds, to priests, but when the time came, the Holy See might confer that faculty on him.<sup>18</sup> The quarrel between the trustees and Nugent had broken out anew towards the end of the summer of 1787, and in October, Father Carroll journeyed to New York to listen to the charges made against the Irish Capuchin. Shea writes:

The trustees learned none too soon that their action in regard to Rev. Charles Whelan had deprived the congregation of a worthy priest and left it to the mercy of a wolf in sheep's clothing. They now besought the Very Rev. Prefect to deliver them from the very priest whom they had forced upon him. They presented such serious charges against the Rev. Father Andrew Nugent, that Dr. Carroll, informed from Dublin of his previous suspension there, withdrew the faculties which he had cautiously granted him only during his own pleasure. He appointed as pastor of St. Peter's congregation, New York, a worthy Dominican, the

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<sup>16</sup> Carroll to Plowden, November 13, 1786, *Stonyhurst Transcripts*, printed in the *United States Catholic Miscellany*, vol. vi, p. 183.

<sup>17</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. 878, no.3.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid., Lettere*, vol. 250, f. 443.

Rev. William O'Brien, who had already done parochial work in Philadelphia and New Jersey, and was highly recommended by the Archbishop of Dublin, in whose Diocese he had labored worthily for sixteen years.<sup>19</sup>

The schismatics now assumed a threatening attitude. Father Nugent refused to yield to Carroll's authority, and an unfortunate scene occurred in St. Peter's Church on Sunday morning, when Father Carroll was about to begin Mass. Nugent began a tirade against Carroll to the people, and the prefect announced to the people Nugent's suspension, cautioning them not to attend any Mass the schismatic might dare to celebrate. Father Carroll then withdrew, followed by the more sensible members of the congregation, and proceeded to Gardoqui's house, where he celebrated Mass. Father Nugent said Mass at St. Peter's in defiance of the prefect. Dr. Carroll then published an address to the Catholics of New York explaining the nature of his spiritual authority and of church discipline. Lay intrusion into the sanctuary he called a fatal dagger plunged into the heart of religion, and disobedience to legitimate authority in the Church would have but one result to the schismatics—excommunication and spiritual death:

*Dear Christians, and most beloved Brethern in Jesus Christ:*

Before we proceed any further in the service of this day, I esteem it necessary, for causes well known to you all, to address you with all the fervour of charity, with all the concern for your eternal happiness, and all the interest for the honour of our holy religion, which my duty—superintendence over the welfare of this congregation—requires from me. If the ministers of Christ must always feel a solicitude for the interests of their heavenly Master, how greatly must this solicitude increase when his holy religion is in danger of being dishonored by dissensions, by indocility, or the mischievous operation of any other passion; and, especially, if this should happen on its first introduction into a country where,

<sup>19</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 323-324. The letters on Father Whelan's later life are in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9; some of them have been printed in the *Researches*, vol. xxix, pp. 267-268. Father Whelan went first to Crawford, Orange Co., New York; he then returned to the metropolis for Holy Week; in 1790, he was located at Johnstown, N. Y. The same year, he was sent by Carroll to Kentucky, but shortly afterwards he left that mission without the permission of the Prefect-Apostolic. His spirit seems to have been broken by the ingratitude of the New York Catholics. In 1799, he was stationed in Wilmington, Del. He attended the Catholics at Ivy Mills, Pa., and in January, 1800, we find him at Mill Creek, Del. In February, 1803, he was at Coffee Run, Del., and from this last "station," he went to Bohemia, where he died on March 21, 1806, at the age of sixty-five. Cf. *Records*, vol. xvi, pp. 363ss.



before, it was only seen through the false coloring of prejudice and misrepresentation. It is then, dear Christian brethern, under the impression which these considerations have made on me, that I appear before you this day; and that I beseech you to recall to your remembrance the principles of your holy faith, and the maxims of church government, by an adhesion to which nations have been brought out of the darkness of paganism into the light of the Gospel;—and your forefathers, in particular, preserved in their own country, and to the present day, the purity of the faith delivered down to them from the first apostles of Christianity;—they preserved it under every temporal discouragement, and against the influence of every worldly interest.

And how did they obtain this great effect? Was it by intruding themselves into the sanctuary? Did they, did you before you crossed over into this country, assume to yourselves the rights of your first pastors? Did you name those clergymen who were charged with the immediate care of your souls? Did you invest them with their authority? Did you confer on them those powers, without which their ministry must be of no avail? No, dear Christians; neither your forefathers nor you assumed to yourselves those prerogatives: you never plunged that fatal dagger into the vitals of true religion. Too deeply was it impressed on your minds, that the ministry of the word, and the administration of the sacraments, cannot be given in charge but by His divine authority whose doctrine is to be preached, and who has enriched his sacraments with the treasures of grace and salvation. You cannot but remember that, when Jesus was on the point of ascending up into heaven, and to leave his Church under the visible government of his apostles and their successors, he communicated to them that spiritual and sublime jurisdiction which the world cannot give, and which extends itself not over the bodies but over the souls of men—a jurisdiction which can be derived but from God; which cannot be acquired merely under the sanction or by the sole authority of any human laws. To fill our minds with a due sense of the sublimity of this sacred jurisdiction, Christ, before he bequeathed it as his last legacy to his apostles, addressed to them these awful and solemn words, recorded by St. Matthew, chap. 28, and spoke to them saying, *All power is given to me in heaven and in earth.* Having thus brought to their recollection the heavenly ministry which he himself had dispensed on earth; that he had received it not from man, but from his Father who is in heaven; and that power was given to him to transmit it to others for the salvation of the world—as my Father sent me so do I send you; John, chap. 22. He thus continued his discourse: *Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.* The apostles having received this commission from their heavenly Master, proceeded in the work of the ministry; they dispensed the sacraments, they announced the good tidings of salvation, and they appointed pastors to the congre-

gations which were gathered together. To these pastors so appointed others succeeded, and so down to the present day, deriving their powers of exercising the sacred functions of religion not from men, but from the same sacred source as the apostles themselves. That the Catholic church possesses a spiritual jurisdiction so transmitted, through every age, is her distinguishing and glorious prerogative; and if it were possible for her to lose this prerogative, she would cease to hold any spiritual authority.

Sometimes she has had cause to deplore the indocility of some of her children, who have attributed powers to themselves which God alone could bestow; and whenever these undutiful children have obstinately resisted the charitable admonitions of their first pastors, and have not soon returned to an acknowledgment of spiritual subordination, they rapidly advanced in the track of disobedience, and completed the course of their iniquity by bidding defiance to the church herself.

I shall not here mention any examples to establish the truth of what I have said: they are known to you, and you had them undoubtedly in your mind, when, on a very late occasion, you publicly acknowledged the just right and power of him who now speaks to you to constitute and appoint clergymen to the care of souls, within the extent of his jurisdiction, and, namely, in this very church. In making this acknowledgement, you did not consider my imperfections or personal unworthiness; but you considered the source from which my authority is derived; and you knew that it could be traced up to Christ himself, the Author and Fountain Head of all spiritual jurisdiction. With this firm persuasion on your minds, you admitted the lawfulness of my delegation and my right to appoint the clergymen to have charge of your souls. You admitted this in a manner the most explicit, and with a zeal for which my thanks are not worthy of being offered you, since you receive those of religion herself.

In the exercise, therefore, of a power so well established, both by our present discipline, (which is protected by the laws of this state,) and by your own admission and acknowledgement, I proceed to give you public notice, that, having heretofore granted to the Rev. Andrew Nugent, during my pleasure, powers for preaching, and administering the sacraments of baptism, penance, eucharist to sick persons, extreme unction and matrimony. I hereby recall those powers: and my duty demanding of me at the same time to provide a pastor for the care of your souls, I have invested with all necessary and requisite powers for that purpose the Rev. Mr. William O'Brien, of whose zeal, virtue and talents for the work of the ministry, I have received the most ample testimony and assurances, and whom I recommend to your benevolence and regard. This is not the time for enlarging on the motives which brought me to my present determination; but I entreat you to believe that it was formed without passion or unfavourable prejudices; and that, if I had not conceived it my duty to act in the manner I have done, my authority should never have been exerted to the purposes of which you were just now informed.

And now, dear Christians, allow me to entreat you to join with united

hearts in presenting at the throne of grace the Sacred Victim who is going to be offered on this altar: and earnestly to beseech Almighty God, the bestower of every good gift, to behold with complacency the living body and blood of his blessed Son, held up and presented by us all to him, as a propitiation for our crimes; and that it may draw down on this congregation every heavenly blessing, and, above all, perfect charity, well grounded hope, and unshaken and active faith; may these virtues rest with you for ever, and bring you to eternal life.<sup>20</sup>

The trustees received this admonition in a loyal spirit and they placed a new lock on the door of the church to prevent the Nugent schismatics from entering. The following Sunday, the rebels broke down the door and filled the church with the crowd of non-Catholics who had gathered to witness the scene. Father Carroll, who was present with the trustees, attempted to speak, but was prevented, and a second time went to the Spanish Embassy, where Mass was said. He saw now that the schism had gone beyond his control, and he left New York for Baltimore. Before leaving the city, he wrote to Father John Thorpe, on November 7, 1787, giving him a complete account of the trouble. He felt the chagrin of the whole affair very deeply, because Congress was then in session in New York, and thus the story of the schism might easily be spread over the whole country. Nugent had threatened to carry his case to the Holy See, and Carroll asked Father Thorpe to bring his message to Propaganda. The outstanding factor of the Nugent case, apart from its effect on discipline was the slender hope Carroll could entertain in the future that the "volunteer clergymen emigrants to America" would be men of virtue and piety; there was danger in the future in trusting to their credentials, no matter from what ecclesiastical authority abroad. Priests were needed so badly that he could not refuse all who came, and the sad thing was that he was at the mercy not only of unworthy ministers of the altar who left their dioceses under a cloud but even of opportunist bishops across the Atlantic who foisted on the infant Church of the United States clergymen who were causing trouble or giving scandal in their dioceses.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> This Charge (*Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9) is printed in the *United States Catholic Miscellany*, vol. vi, pp. 184-186.

<sup>21</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9-M6. Father Thorpe's rendition of the affair is in the *Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 353.

The trustees now took the case to court, eventually regaining possession of the church, and with Father William O'Brien in charge of the parish, the schism came to an end. John Talbot Smith says: "They awed the pugnacious Father Nugent into perfect quiet, for he is not heard of again in the parish history until his friends got up a subscription to send him back to Europe in the bark *Telemaque*, some date in 1790."<sup>22</sup> The Nugent Schism, as Carroll expressed it in one of his letters to Antonelli, had produced a good effect: it had given the necessary stimulus to the clergy to apply to the Holy See for episcopal government.

Closely allied to the scandal in New York was the trouble which arose in Boston about the same time. In the autumn of 1788 the little group of Catholics in and around Boston was overjoyed at the arrival of a French secular priest, from the Diocese of Angers, the Rev. Claude Florent Bouchard de la

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<sup>22</sup> JOHN TALBOT SMITH, *The Catholic Church in New York*, vol. i, p. 31. Father Nugent, however, appears after Father O'Brien's appointment, in the documents in our possession. On February 23, 1788, Antonelli wrote to Carroll (*Propaganda Archives, Lettere*, vol. 252, f. 732), acknowledging the information given to the Roman officials by Father Thorpe. There was no fear in Rome that Carroll would not be able to control the situation judiciously and prudently.—"Sed cum satis nobis de tua prudentia ac dexteritate persuasum sit, minime dubitamus quin ea quae gessisti jure cauteque, feceris, illudque in hujusmodi negotio consilium capias, quod et ad coercendam hominis imprudentiam et ad consulendam catholici gregis securitati accommodatum videtur." Carroll tells Plowden on March 1, 1788 that he now suspects Nugent's testimonials of being forged—"for Nugent has been detected to be a most infamous fellow, and there is no excess of which he does not seem capable." Again, in a letter to Antonelli, dated March 18-April 19, 1788, the Prefect-Apostolic gives a detailed account of Nugent's escapades, and emphasizes the point made by the recalcitrant priest's followers, that of being a simple priest, acting under the authority of a foreign power (asserere non dubitabant jurisdictionem meam, tanquam a Sede Apostolica profectam, extraneam esse adeoque legibus contrariam). Carroll adds that Nugent has asserted he will acknowledge no authority but that of Christ and of the civil authorities of New York. The necessity of episcopal authority in America becomes more evident every day, and he urges Antonelli to consider the matter seriously. He knows that such a demand may throw suspicion on himself of being ambitious, but the danger of disrupting the bonds of ecclesiastical life is so pressing that silence is impossible. He feels the situation so keenly that he is almost constrained to resign the burden the Sacred Congregation has placed upon him (*Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 363). In the Clergy Petition for the establishment of a bishop (March 12, 1788), the New York Schism is mentioned as one of the aggravating causes of Church disunity in America. On April 17, 1788, Carroll sent a letter to the trustees of St. Peter's commending them for their support of Father O'Brien, who was then setting out for Mexico to collect funds for the completion of the Church (SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 332; cf. *Researches*, vol. xvii, pp. 7-8). Occasional references are made to the Nugent affair in the correspondence between Carroll and Antonelli down to the time of his election as Bishop of Baltimore, and it is evident that the schism had strongly influenced the Holy See in establishing episcopal government in the United States.



Poterie, who had been a chaplain in the French army forces under Rochambeau.<sup>23</sup> On December 24, 1788, Father Carroll gave him faculties, and the new "Curate" announced his appointment in a flamboyant "*Pastoral Letter*,—Given at Boston, in North America, under our hand, and the seal of our arms, the 22nd of February, Quinquagesima Sunday, anno salutis 1789—*signed*, La Poterie, Vice-Prefect and Apostolick Missionary, Curate of the Holy Cross at Boston." This astounding document reveals characteristics which were not common to the Boston "Prothonotary" alone. The initial paragraphs are as follows:

CLAUDIUS FLORENT BOUCHARD de la POTERIE, Doctor of Divinity, Prothonotary of the holy Church and of the holy See of Rome, apostolic Vice-Prefect and Missionary, Curate of the Catholick Church of the Holy Cross at Boston, in North America—to all faithful Christians entrusted to our care and of our spiritual jurisdiction, salvation and blessing in Jesus Christ, the shepherd and bishop of our souls.

WE make known to you, our dearly beloved brethren, the wonderful designs of Divine Providence towards us, which, by a course of unheard-of events, has brought us to this city, here to open the first publick exercise, and here to lay the foundation, perhaps even here to erect the edifice of our holy religion. Since the American Revolution, this Divine Providence has brought about a revolution still more extraordinary in the method of grace; and being designated to be one of its instruments in the hand of God, with what sentiments of profound gratitude to the Father of mercies ought we not to be penetrated? But, at the same time we look with awe upon the immensity of the duties to which our office subjects us. The entire knowledge of their extent, and of our own insufficiency, the more powerfully engages us, and ought to incline you also, by the interest you have in the success of the ministry, to implore for us assistance from Him, with whom we can do all things, as without him we can do nothing.

My Lord CAROL, the ecclesiastic Superior of the Roman Hierarchy in the United States of America, did on the 24th of December last, communicate to me very ample powers, for which we have requested, in quality of French missionary, to be registered in the French Consul's Chancery-Office at Boston, to spend our time in this city, here to exercise our cares and vigilance, and to give you all the spiritual assistance in our power. It is for this reason we esteem ourselves, in the truest sense, the servant of you all, since we are indebted to you for our appoint-

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<sup>23</sup> GRIFFIN, *Catholics in the American Revolution*, vol. iii, pp. 289-299. It is not certain when Poterie came to Boston; some authorities say that it was in 1784, but that seems improbable, for the Abbé could hardly have kept silent for so long a period.



ment to carry you to God, by our exhortations, by our counsels, by our examples, by our life itself, if it is necessary, to save you all. We do not place our happiness in commanding you with authority, but in serving you with charity; being full of candour and mildness towards every one, to gain your hearts to the grace of Jesus Christ, we ought to be to all a model of works, having always before our eyes the account we are to give to God for you. We beseech you, our very dear brethren, to bring down upon us, by your fervent prayers, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of meekness and resolution, in order that this double spirit, presiding over all our steps, over all our actions, may support us against our weakness, may defend us against all kinds of danger, and be an abundant supply to our own impotency.<sup>24</sup>

Mass was said for the first time on November 2, 1788, and a brick church which had belonged to some French Huguenots was purchased and opened under the title of the Church of the Holy Cross. The congregation was composed of the French and Irish Catholic citizens of Boston, in number about one hundred and twenty.<sup>25</sup> Whatever welcome the Abbé received was hardly spontaneous. Most of the Catholics seem to have held

<sup>24</sup> From a copy in my possession. On Poterie's career, cf. *Memoirs du P. de Sales Laterrière*, p. 165. Quebec, 1873; *Gazette de Quebec*, October 22, 1789; CAREY, *American Museum*, vol. v, pp. 414ss. In a broadside, printed sometime after February 4, 1789, in reply to the "false and scandalous aspersions thrown upon him," Poterie's list of his "Credentials," the originals of which are to be seen in the Vestry of the Catholic Church, School Street, Boston," are as follows: "I. His Patent of Sacerdotal Ordination; II. Certificate of his Studies, and Patents of the University of Angers; III. A Certificate of his Morals, by his Bishop, the original deposited in Rome, in the Secretary's Office of the Tribunal of his Eminence the Cardinal Vicar Prince Colonna; and a renewal of the same Certificate confirmed by his Successor, which is deposited in Paris, in the office of the Ecclesiastick Notaries, and the signatures certified by the proper Officer; IV. A Letter and Diploma of His Holiness, in form of a Brief, directed to the same; and of his Oath, in the hands of the Patriarch of Jerusalem; V. A Diploma of his admission to the number of Protonotaries of His Holiness, by virtue of the same Brief; VI. A Patent of Count Palatine, which His Holiness grants as Sovereign in his Dominions, to those he thinks worthy of that dignity; VII. A Patent of admission and reception of Member of two learned Academies in Rome; VIII. Sundry Powers, Permits, and Privileges Apostolick, granted to the same in his abode at Rome; IX. A Commendatory Pass of the Municipal Officers of his native town: Also, another Pass, by his Majesty in Versailles, at the time of his passage to the West-Indies; X. A Patent and Diploma of Knight of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem; XI. Ample Powers and Spiritual Jurisdiction in the United States of America; XII. A Great number of Powers and satisfactory Certificates of several Bishops and Arch-Bishops, and those of the Arch-Bishops of Paris, and Palermo in Sicily; XIII. Authentick Declaration of the reality of the Relicts, exposed in the Church of the Holy Cross."

<sup>25</sup> Father Carroll gave faculties to Poterie, on December 24, 1788 (*Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9A-G3); cf. *Historical Sketch of the First Public Mass in Boston*, in the *Researches*, vol. vi, pp. 19-20; cf. *Researches*, vol. iii, pp. 12-15. A full account of the ceremony appeared in the *Independent Chronicle* for November 6, 1788.

aloof from him, and it was six months before he baptized a child. There were rumours about his former ecclesiastical standing, and Poterie was kept busy replying to these "false and scandalous aspersions thrown upon him." His broadsides are comical; one of them contains a list of "credentials" among them being patents of his election as a count of the Holy Roman Empire and of his admission into two learned academies in Rome. He was evidently an early believer in the value of advertising.<sup>26</sup> He came to Boston unprovided with vestments and church utensils, and an appeal was sent through the French Consul to the Archbishop of Paris, with a request for sacred vessels and vestments. The Archbishop of Paris generously sent the necessary objects, but at the same time warned the French Catholics of Boston that Poterie had been suspended in Paris, owing to conduct unbecoming a Catholic priest. News of the man's extraordinary behaviour reached Carroll, who wrote to Plowden on May 8, 1789: "I have been grossly deceived by one from whom I expected much and who opened his ministry in Boston. He is a Frenchman, calling himself La Poterie and procured indisputable recommendations, but has turned out a sad rascal."<sup>27</sup> In a subsequent letter to Plowden, dated July 12, 1789, he again refers to his deception in the man. Father Carroll asked the Rev. William O'Brien to go to Boston to examine into the state of affairs of the little congregation, with the result that on May 20, 1789, Poterie was suspended, and a committee of the parish assumed the debts he had contracted. Poterie's mind no doubt was unbalanced. After his departure from Boston on July 8, 1789, he went to Quebec, but returned in December of that year. There is a letter from Poterie to his creditors in the *Columbian Centinel* of Boston, dated December 16, 1789, which states that he will endeavour to pay all the debts he had made. B. A. Campbell says that he lived in Boston as a private individual until January 19, 1790, when he left for the West Indies. Before he left, however, he published a violent attack upon Father Carroll and the priests of the Church in the United States

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. *Belknap Papers* in the Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, Series v, vol. ii, pp. 110-125; LEAHY, *Archdiocese of Boston*, in the *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States*, vol. i, pp. 18ss. Boston, 1899.

<sup>27</sup> *Stonyhurst Transcripts*; cf. *United States Catholic Miscellany*, vol. viii, p. 102.

under the title: *The Resurrection of Laurent Ricci; or a True and Exact History of the Jesuits*. This vicious work was dedicated: *To the new Laurent Ricci in America, the Rev. Fr. John Carroll, Superior of the Jesuits in the United States, also to the friar-inquisitor, William O'Brien*.<sup>28</sup> There was at this time in Boston, another French priest, Rev. Louis Rousselet, who had also led an unfortunate life before coming to America, to whom Carroll had given faculties. It is a sad commentary on the ecclesiastical methods of the day that both Poterie and Rousselet came to Father Carroll with recommendations and credentials.<sup>29</sup> Again, the little congregation in Boston had a scandalous situation on its hands, and Father Carroll suspended Rousselet, who is said to have gone to the Island of Guadeloupe in June, 1791, and while there fell a victim to the French Revolutionists. Campbell relates that while in prison he informed the other prisoners that he was a suspended priest, but that in their case, with the guillotine awaiting them on the morrow, church law gave him the right to prepare them for death. He heard the confessions of many and gave them absolution; his only regret being that he had to go into eternity "without having the efficacious graces of the Sacraments applied to my poor soul."<sup>30</sup>

Carroll's letters to Plowden show how difficult his position had become at this time. In a letter, dated July 12, 1789, he says:

Some time ago I was much pleased with the letters (which were written in the language of an apostle) of a French priest, who had wandered to Boston. I received several letters of strong recommendation, testimonials, &c., all which joined to his own sentiments of submission, induced me to grant him faculties for a short term. He proceeded with great rapidity to open divine service, introduced music, celebrated all the ceremonies of a cathedral, &c., and he proceeded to make some publications which soon convinced me of his imprudence. He soon after discovered himself to be an infamous character, his faculties are revoked, and he now proceeds to every abuse against me, as a Jesuit, aiming at

<sup>28</sup> Published at Philadelphia in 1789. Father Lorenzo Ricci was the last General of the Society of Jesus (1758-1775) before the Suppression. Cf. FINOTTI, *Bibliographia Catholica Americana*, pp. 224-225. Boston, 1872.

<sup>29</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9A-G4; cf. *Researches*, vol. vi, pp. 16-20, 134-135; vol. xxiii, p. 130.

<sup>30</sup> An interesting letter from Rousselet to Bishop Hubert, of Quebec (January 2, 1790) requesting information on Poterie's character is in the *Archiepiscopal Archives of Quebec, États-Unis, Miscellaneous*. Cf. *Records*, vol. xviii, p. 46.

nothing in my manœuvrings, but to re-establish the order here, under the title of American clergy. It is singular enough that some of our own friends are blaming me for being too irresolute or indifferent, for not adopting their most intemperate counsels with respect to restoring the Society, whilst on the other hand Smyth, the Abbé, and others, are accusing me of sacrificing to this intention the good of religion. The Abbé has been at Rome, and pretends an acquaintance with Cardinal York, and other consequential characters there; he is exceeding insinuating, and as great a hypocrite in his letters as I ever knew. If he be only slightly known, he may impose, but I am sure that he has resided no where long, without betraying his infamy. I think he has lately discovered such knavery, that I should not wonder at his using the most iniquitous means of pursuing his resentment. Before his faculties were recalled, I directed him not to use, as he had done, public prayers for the king of France in the Sunday service, as is done for our own ruling powers, because a government jealous of its independence might construe it into an undue attachment of American Roman Catholics for a foreign prince. He at first acquiesced in the propriety of my direction, but he now says I forbade prayers for the king of France because the French expelled the Jesuits; and I think him capable of writing such falsehood to Europe, even to his ministry. His name is La Poterie. Luckily the French corps diplomatique here are well acquainted with his character. Mr. Thayer will have much to do to repair the scandals committed by this man.”<sup>31</sup>

On April 14, 1789, a few weeks after Poterie's suspension, Father Carroll sent a statement of the case to Cardinal Antonelli, telling him how eagerly he was awaiting the arrival of Father John Thayer, the convert Congregationalist minister (who had been ordained in Paris, in 1787), in order to place the church in Boston under his charge. He mentions the presence of Rousselet in Boston, but already his suspicions were aroused regarding the character of Poterie's successor.<sup>32</sup> Carroll's letters to Thorpe reveal the delinquencies of the first two pastors of the Boston congregation, and it is well that the prefect sent this information to Rome, for he had not yet heard the last of Poterie's defection. On January 6, 1790, Poterie wrote from Boston to Cardinal Antonelli to the effect that within a short time the five northern States would secede from the others, where the ex-Jesuits were in charge, and hence the only superior he

<sup>31</sup> *Stonyhurst Transcripts*; this letter is printed in the *United States Catholic Miscellany*, vol. viii, pp. 102-103; cf. HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, p. 688.

<sup>32</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scrittura originali*, vol. 883, no. 3.



would be able to recognize would be the Cardinal-Prefect.<sup>33</sup> He assails the ex-Jesuits as guilty of intrigue with the Empress of all the Russias in their endeavour to resurrect their Society. It was very necessary, therefore, that ecclesiastically, the United States be divided. "How can a single man," he writes, "who never goes outside Maryland keep control of the 80,000 Catholic souls scattered far and wide in this vast country." He had met a great number of Catholics who never heard of John Carroll. He celebrated Holy Mass on August 15, 1789, in Rhode Island and then journeyed through Connecticut and New Hampshire. The Jesuits, he says, are so hated and derided in the country that the very mention of the restoration of the Society is enough to provoke serious difficulty in the New World. "This turbulent and ambitious group," he continues, "has established a college and novitiate at Georgetown, in Maryland, where the novelty of their instructions and their doctrines is a serious menace to the nascent Church of Jesus Christ in this part of the world." There is one way to prevent "ces orages les plus terribles et les plus inevitables," and that is for the Cardinal-Prefect to appoint Poterie prefect or vicar-apostolic. Poterie then calls Antonelli's attention to the brochure of Smyth. He places charges of irregular conduct against Carroll in Canada and elsewhere. "A New York ce même père a commis des scandales que deux cents ans de pénitence ne sauraient faire oublier." In Philadelphia, he asserts Carroll was the direct cause of a schism among the Germans. Poterie then asks that Antonelli choose some one from the English, Irish, or Scottish Colleges at Rome to aid him as coadjutor in his vast work. Again he asks to be made a vicar-apostolic with episcopal powers, and urges the appointment of other vicars, who are not infected with "Jésuitisme." The back of the document contains the terse statement: "Fu risposto a di 14 Agosto, 1790, e la lettera fu mandata all'istesso Vescovo di Baltimore."<sup>34</sup> Another document of this date in Italian, contains the same general statement, and emphasizes the fervour

<sup>33</sup> Poterie's difficulties led him as early as October 6, 1788, to write to Bishop Hubert asking to be accepted into the Diocese of Quebec; on January 29, 1789, he wrote requesting Holy Oils; again on May 16, 1789, he sent to Hubert a printed leaflet on his school project in Boston (*Archiepiscopal Archives of Quebec, Etats-Unis, Miscellaneus*).

<sup>34</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 376.



of Poterie "che aveva sacrificato i suoi beni e tutto il suo zelo per le cerimonie venerande di quella santa religione."<sup>35</sup> Propaganda should realize, the statement adds, that religion in the United States will never make any advance under the direction of the ex-Jesuits. It is this fact which induced Poterie to publish his *Resurrection of Laurent Ricci*.<sup>36</sup>

From New York and Boston the evil of insubordination on the part of clergy and people spread to the chief centre of Catholic life at that time, Philadelphia. The Colonial epoch of Catholicism in Pennsylvania may be considered to have ended with the death of Father Ferdinand Farmer on August 17, 1786. Father Farmer was one of the most gifted men in the American Mission; in 1779, he was appointed a trustee of the University of Pennsylvania. With the coming of Father Molyneux to Philadelphia in 1773, the Church in Philadelphia began its long career of splendour. Father Molyneux saw the assembling of the First Continental Congress, for he lived but a short distance from Carpenter's Hall. He was among the first to read the Declaration of Independence in July, 1776, and though we have no means now of ascertaining his attitude on the question of independence, his silence can be taken as indicative of his feelings; for, from September 27, 1777, until June 18, 1778, when the British troops under Howe were in possession of the city, he sedulously kept apart, Englishman though he was, from all the brilliant festivities and entertainments which stand out so pathetically as England's last and futile attempt to win the confidence of her colonists. Father Farmer, also, was in the city much of the time, and no doubt the two priests found spiritual work in abundance among the Catholic English, Irish and German troops of Howe's army. The participation of Congress in the services at St. Mary's especially at the first public celebration of Independence Day, in the little church on July 4, 1779, must have made a profound impression on the two priests. Father Molyneux reported to Carroll, as we have already seen, that the city contained (1784) about one thousand Catholics, and their civil status was no doubt better in Philadelphia than elsewhere. Father Farmer's name heads the signers of the

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<sup>35</sup> *Propaganda Archives*, I. c., f. 378.

<sup>36</sup> From a copy in the Congressional Library, Washington, D. C.

address given to Washington in Philadelphia, on December 13, 1783,<sup>37</sup> and his funeral on August 18, 1786, was the occasion of a notable gathering of the social and intellectual leaders of the city.<sup>38</sup> All the Protestant clergy attended, and there were present also the members of the American Philosophical Society, the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania, and many non-Catholics, who had learned to reverence the quiet, dignified and thoroughly apostolic priest. Father Molyneux preached the funeral sermon over his devoted friend, taking as his text the words of the Psalm: "The just shall be in everlasting remembrance." Among these, he said, was his venerable brother and amiable friend:

Your pious and zealous pastor, who has now paid the debt we all owe to nature, has left us, to go, we hope, to enjoy the reward of his long and faithful labours: he is gone too soon for us, who still wanted his fatherly counsels and wholesome instructions, but not too soon for himself, who had no other desire on earth than to serve his heavenly Master, under whose banners, he had enlisted: and no other hope in leaving it than that of resting in His embrace for all eternity. Thither then, we hope, his noble and immortal soul, delivered from the dark prison of flesh, has taken its happy flight and amid consolation of finding the end of all his views and wishes unchangeably accomplished.

He began his mission at Lancaster, where he resided six years in all the poverty and humility of an apostle. From there he was called to Philadelphia, where he has lived ever since in the same humble and active style, esteemed by all ranks: and particularly revered and beloved by his flock, who had nearer opportunities of knowing his singular worth and merit. His learning and other commendable qualifications soon drew the public notice. Hence, without seeking the honour, he was admitted, by the suffrages of learned acquaintances, a member of the Philosophical Society. To his correspondence with Father Myers, late astronomer to the elector Palatine, now Duke of Bavaria, that society is indebted for some curious pieces of that mathematician in the transit of Venus dedicated to the Empress of Russia. He has since been appointed to the Board of Trustees of the University of this city, but his multiplied immediate functions of another nature prevented him from giving that punctual attendance to the duties of these appointments and from being of that general utility for which inclination, as well as abilities, would have otherwise rendered him well qualified. Such has been the man whose remains are before us; while, therefore, we are assembled to pay our last tribute of our regard and affection to his memory and drop the

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<sup>37</sup> Cf. *Researches*, vol. xvii, p. 46.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. xxvii, p. 239.

mourning tear on his funeral tomb, let us not indulge ourselves in unreasonable grief nor be sorrowful, like those who are without hope. He is gone but a little while before us and points, by edifying examples and faithful instructions, to the way we must follow. . . . Many will long remember with what unwearied solicitude he acted the part of a tender and vigilant shepherd, sparing no pains or labour to seek out and reclaim any of the flock under his charge that had unhappily strayed out of the sweet pastures of virtue and righteousness, in which he strove to feed and preserve them from every infection of vice and danger of perversion. His fatiguing and extensive excursions through a neighbouring State and various parts of this, in search of little flocks scattered in the wilderness, will be long retained in their minds and preserved in their breasts as grateful monuments of his unwearied zeal and unbounded charity, and as perennial proofs of the faithful performance of the duties of his ministry.

It remains with us, whom he has left behind, carefully to follow in the steps of virtue which he has traced out for us by his bright and edifying example. If we closely adhere to these, you who have been the constant objects of his pastoral care and whom he has always cherished as his "joy and crown, entreating and comforting you as a father doth his children," will reap the fruits of his past labours to your own present consolation and further happiness, and to his joy and glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming; and you and your children after you will be blessed in his successors with pious and zealous pastors, who continuing in the steps of so worthy a predecessor, will, it is to be hoped, by labouring with a like zeal and fidelity in this little vineyard of our Lord, bring to perfection what he has so happily begun."

Sometime before 1786, Father Farmer had written to the Rev. Laurence Graessl, a young Bavarian priest, asking him to come to America to assist in the work of ministering to the German Catholics of Pennsylvania. Father Graessl, who was then in London, set out immediately, arriving in Philadelphia in October, 1787.

That same month, there came unsolicited to Philadelphia two other German priests, brothers and members of the Capuchin Order—John Charles and Peter Heilbron.<sup>39</sup> Without waiting for faculties from the prefect-apostolic, these two German priests began their ministry. Both were men above average intelligence, and they soon made an impression on the German

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<sup>39</sup> A certain Paul Millar, of Conewago, sent a letter to a friend in Germany, which was published in the *Mainzer Monatschrift*, in 1785, in which he appealed for German priests for the Pennsylvania missions. The two Heilbron brothers accepted the layman's invitation and came to Philadelphia.

Catholics of Philadelphia and the vicinity. The members of St. Mary's parish desired that one of the brothers be appointed as their pastor, but Father Carroll had already appointed Father Graessl.<sup>40</sup> A faction arose, and Father Graessl seems to have left the city for a time, the parish being conducted by Fathers Molyneux and Beeston, the latter having been sent by Carroll to assist Molyneux, who was then in ill-health.<sup>41</sup> In March, 1788, Father Graessl returned and Father Molyneux retired to Bohemia, while Father Beeston became pastor of St. Mary's. The feeling was abroad in the city that the German Catholics ought to form a congregation of their own, wherein "the language and customs of the Fatherland would obtain, and their children be instructed in the tongue of their people."<sup>42</sup> Adam Premir was elected chairman of a German Catholic committee for this purpose, and on February 21, 1788, a lot at Sixth and Spruce Streets, where Holy Trinity Church now stands, was bought. The place at that time was outside the city limits. Premir announced this purchase to Father Carroll on February 23, 1788, and asked his approval for the proposed church.<sup>43</sup> On March 3, 1788, Father Carroll replied that the plan, as far as it was conducive to the betterment of their religious life, received his hearty approbation. He was hesitant, however, because he was uncertain whether the new church could be maintained, and also because there might be danger of causing a division between the Catholics of the city. Father Farmer had opposed the separation of his countrymen on racial lines, and no doubt the new church was delayed by his wise and prudent management. After his death, the project was revived. Father Molyneux had warned the prefect-apostolic that "there is and always has been in the Germans a kind of jealousy on account of a pretended preference or sympathy in the Irish in the management of pews, etc." Carroll, who was suspicious that the separatists were resentful

<sup>40</sup> Carroll to Plowden, March 1-13, 1788, *Stonyhurst Transcripts*; cf. HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, pp. 687-688.

<sup>41</sup> HUGHES, *l. c.*, p. 616.

<sup>42</sup> KIRLIN, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

<sup>43</sup> GRIFFIN has used the most important documents from the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives* on this episode in his *Church of the Holy Trinity, Philadelphia*, in the *Records*, vol. xxi, p. 2-45. Cf. [Hertkorn], *A Retrospect of Holy Trinity Parish: a Souvenir of the 125th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Church*. Philadelphia, 1914.

of his refusal to appoint one of the Heilbrons to the pastorate, warned Premir that his decision in that regard was final. "Above all things," he added, "be mindful of charity and brotherly love, avoid contentions, never assuming the exercise of that power, which can only be communicated to the minister of Christ: let the election of the pastor of your new church be so settled that every danger of a tumultuous appointment be avoided as much as possible. In any country this would be hurtful to religion; in this, it would totally destroy it. . . . As you undertake to raise your church at your own charge and with your own industry, it is possible you may have it in view to reserve to yourselves the appointment of its clergymen, even without the concurrence of the ecclesiastical superior. On this matter I request to hear again from you as I conceive it may involve consequences to religion of the most serious nature."<sup>44</sup> Premir and the committee interpreted this letter as an approval of their project, and the building of the church commenced at once.

Father Beeston opposed the division of his parish and highly resented Carroll's letter to the German trustees. No copy of Beeston's letter is extant, but its general tenor can be seen in Father Carroll's answer:

*Baltimore, March 22nd, 1788.*

*Rev'd. Dr. Sir:—*

Since Mr. Bussy's departure, I have reconsidered with all the attention, which I could command, the subject of your letter, and all the events, which have passed, relatively to the German Seceders (if they may be called such) as far as I have been concerned in these transactions; and I must still think, notwithstanding your complaint against me, that when a number of people, disclaiming all pretence to independence of spiritual jurisdiction, request my approbation to build a church, I cannot refuse a qualified approbation of a work, which may terminate in the honour of God. That this idea arose from their disappointment in not gaining Mr. Heilbron, I believe; and that this motive may be uppermost in the minds of some of the most active persons, I likewise believe; but I cannot help entertaining a hope that some of the party have better principles of conduct; and, whether in this I am deceived or not, I can console myself, and I know, that you will, with St. Paul—Phil. 1.17—*Some out of contention preach Christ, not sincerely: supposing that they raise affliction to us; but what then? so that every way, whether by occasion, or by truth, Christ be preached; in this also we rejoice, yea,*

<sup>44</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives, Case 9-N1, 2, 3, 4.*



*and will rejoice.* Read the following verses, in which you will find encouragement, and the true principles, by which the Society always governed herself, and finally merited superior esteem have followed her in her dissolution, and even increased, if possible. I consider farther, that it is very uncertain, how long the spirit of the Society will be kept alive, at least in this country. I am afraid, not much longer, than they live, who have been trained under its discipline; and into what hands will our religious establishments and possessions fall hereafter, if our proposed school and seminary should fail of success, which certainly is not beyond the bounds of probability? The expense of a Liège education at the advanced price of 40 p. ann. for young Ecclesiastics, renders it impracticable for many Americans to profit by that excellent institution; and even that (without a restoration of the Society) is liable to degeneracy. In case therefore of our own school failing, our houses and foundations will probably fall into the hands of such missionary adventurers, as we have lately seen. Supposing this the case of your house and church at Philadelphia, will it not be a comfort to good Xtians to have another church there; in one of which at least there may be some zeal, some regard for public edification; and this I meant to insinuate in my letter to the German petitioners, when I mentioned, that exertions might be the greater where there was mutual example, etc. Read all Ecclesiastical history; and you will find the best Bishops, a St. Ch. Borromeo, and a St. Francis de Sales, etc., solicitous to multiply Religious establishments. I know very well, that the circumstances were somewhat different, and that, generally speaking, those undertakings were conducted with harmony; but even the history of the Society, and the passage of St. Paul above recited, furnish contrary examples. In opposition to these considerations, you may observe—1st. that I encourage a spirit of revolt and defiance of pastoral authority, 2nd. that I foster a schism, or at least, an uncharitable division amongst the Congregation of Philadelphia.

To the first, I answer, that I have letters from Mr. Molyneux, which I supposed, he had communicated to you, wherein he describes the German petitioners as avowing entire deference to spiritual jurisdiction, and as having taken occasion indeed from my rejection of their application for Heilbron, not to originate, but to renew an idea, some of them had formerly entertained of building themselves a Church. He requested me to answer their petition, if any should be sent, agreeably to his own communication with them, that their plan appeared to be founded on resentment; that they would do well to consult Mr. Pellentz; that the attempt would probably end in ruining themselves and their children. He added, that Mr. Farmer used sometimes to wish they had a Church on the North of the town. In their petition to me, they say, the ground alone in that part of Philadelphia would have made a difference to them of £2000. With all this information, I never conceived, that you could be hurt at my giving so guarded an approbation, as is contained in my letter. You should have been more explicit and expressly marked your entire disapprobation, not only of the motives of the attempt, but of the thing itself.

When their petition came to hand, I consulted my good companion, and Mr. Ashton, who happened to be here; they both said, they did not see, how I could refuse people leave to build a church, provided they did not arrogate their right of making the Pastor.

If hereby I gave them a pretence for triumph over you, it was certainly from not being informed that you had ever manifested any public opposition. Consider my situation: I knew indeed that some of the most respected Germans disliked the attempt; but that a majority of that body opposed it, was unknown to me, till I heard it from you. Could I avoid supposing that advantage would be taken of my refusal (if I had seen cause to give a refusal) to spread the flames of discontent; and to raise a clamour that the Jesuits were determined that no churches should be erected, but by their agency and direction? So far I have spoken in opposition to your charges. I now add—1st. that if you will communicate any particular, well ascertained, and notorious fact of Oellers or others, of a *schismatical* nature (i. e. tending to a rupture of communion with the Cath. Church) or of evidently pernicious example, I will reconsider the sentiments of my short letter by Mr. Bussy, written in great hurry and confusion, as he can inform you of circumstances. If it should be necessary to proceed to the censures of the Church, every matter must be conducted with regularity, and the previous monitions must be given. 2nd. that I shall write to the Germans, as per copy; that their conduct in the affair of Incorporation betrays a spirit very dissonant from the expressions of their petition, etc.; and that if I can make any certain discovery of their being abetted by Messrs. Heilbron, I shall immediately take some vigorous steps with them. 3rd. that if you are quite assured that so considerable a majority as you represent of the Germans, are opposed to them, you ought to lose no time in getting their names to some instrument of writing (memorial or petition) expressive of their sentiments.<sup>45</sup>

The conflict which arose between the German trustees and the pastor of St. Mary's Church and between Holy Trinity Church and Dr. Carroll was to last almost down to the year of Bishop Egan's election to the See of Philadelphia (1808). Holy Trinity is the first national or racial Church in the history of Catholicism in this country, and during Carroll's episcopate it was the centre of a movement which has often disturbed the harmony of the Church down to the present time.

Out beyond the Alleghanies, in the old Illinois Country, where Father Gibault remained alone to care for the French garrisons, difficulties of another sort had arisen. Father Gibault, as Vicar-General of the Bishop of Quebec, would not relinquish his author-

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<sup>45</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9-E1.

ity without the consent of his Ordinary. Consequently, when Father Carroll sent Father Pierre Huet de la Valinière to that district with the powers of a vicar-general, the two jurisdictions, those of Quebec and of Baltimore, came into conflict. When Father Carroll realized the situation, he wrote to Bishop Hubert, on May 5, 1788, asking for information on the subject:

*My Lord:*

I find myself compelled to ask Your Lordship for some light upon a rather delicate matter, and this necessity at the same time gives me an opportunity to assure you of the esteem I entertained for your character and episcopal virtues.

Encouraged by the favorable recommendations with which M. Huet de la Valinière was supplied by his ecclesiastical superiors in Canada, I gladly accepted his offer to go to the Illinois, and have appointed him my vicar general there. Since he left, I have received letters written at Post Vincent [Vincennes] by another priest named Gibault, who tells me that for nineteen years he himself has been the vicar general in that section of the bishops of Canada. It is about this matter, my Lord, that I wish to be informed, and upon which I presume to ask you to throw some light; especially since reports have reached me concerning M. Gibeau's [Gibault's] conduct which are very unfavourable to him.

I learnt some time ago that your Lordship was dissatisfied with me because I meddled in the ecclesiastical government of the Illinois country. I did so because I thought it was included in my jurisdiction, and I had no idea that your Lordship extended your pastoral care to that region. No motive of ambition actuated me; and if you propose to provide for the spiritual needs there, you will save me from great embarrassment and relieve my conscience of a burden which weighs very heavily upon it. In such an event, my only anxiety would be that probably the United States will not allow the exercise of power, even of a spiritual nature, to a subject of Great Britain.

I have the honour to be, with most respectful devotion your Lordship's humble and obedient servant.

J. CARROLL,

*Ecclesiastical Superior of the United States.*<sup>46</sup>

Michigan was still under the British flag at this time and the two ecclesiastical superiors, Carroll and Hubert, settled the question of jurisdiction in this way: Detroit was to remain directly under Quebec, and all official acts of Father Carroll or of his

<sup>46</sup> *Archiepiscopal Archives of Quebec, États-Unis, Miscellaneous*; printed in the *Records*, vol. xviii, pp. 155-156; cf. *Illinois' First Citizen: Pierre Gibault*, by J. J. THOMPSON, in the *Illinois Catholic Historical Review*, vol. i, pp. 79-94, 239-248, 484-494.

vicar-general in the rest of the old Illinois Country would be confirmed by Quebec, until Rome had sent a decision in the matter.

Bishop Hubert, who had in the meantime been warned by Gibault of the presence of the American Vicar-General, wrote to Propaganda asking direction. On October 6, 1788, he replied to Carroll as follows:

*Quebec, October 6, 1788*

*Mr. J. Carroll,  
Prefect Apostolic, at Baltimore,*

*Sir:* Your letter of May 5 having only lately been handed to me, I make it my duty to reply to it and to satisfy you about the subjects of which it treats.

His Eminence Cardinal Antonelli, having learnt that Mr. De La Valinière and the Abbé St. Pierre had been sent to the Illinois with faculties from you, wrote to Mr. de Villars, Vicar-General at Paris of the Bishop of Quebec, to ask him for information thereon, saying that the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda was utterly in the dark in relation to this fact. Upon the report of Mr. De Villars, Bishop D'Esglis, my deceased predecessor, wrote last year in these terms: "By the treaty of peace of 1783, the country situated at the south of the St. Lawrence river from the 45th degree of latitude having been ceded to the Anglo-Americans, and the Illinois being within this portion, the Bishop of Quebec has not sent any permanent missionary there since that time; it is even presumable that the Government would take it in bad part if he did so. Hence things were left as they were until the new order of things. It appears, indeed, that Mr. de la Valinière and Mr. de St. Pierre were appointed to the Illinois region by the Prefect Apostolic of New England. I do not know the extent of their faculties of which they render no account to me; and, as for the rest, I am not disposed to disturb them about it, etc."

Such, Sir, were the sentiments of my predecessor on the subject of these missions. It is true that they are incontestably in the diocese of Quebec according to our original grant, and also that the Seminary of Quebec for that reason long had the right to nominate a superior among the Tamarois, a prerogative which the said Seminary resigned only in favour of the Bishop of Quebec. Be that as it may, I believe it is prudent for us under the circumstances to accommodate ourselves to the new order of things, although I be not at liberty to assent to the dismemberment of this part of my diocese without the consent of my coadjutor and of my clergy. Divine Providence having permitted that the Illinois, etc., should have fallen into the power of the United States, the spiritual charge of which is confided to your care, I urgently beseech you to continue in the meantime to provide for these missions, as it would be difficult for me to supply them myself without perhaps giving some

offence to the British Government. The testimony that is rendered on all sides to your virtue convinces me that the faithful of that section will rejoice to have you for their ecclesiastical superior.

True it is that Mr. Gibault was nominated twenty years ago as a vicar-general for the Illinois country. But since that time the episcopal see of Quebec has twice changed its incumbent without his faculties having been renewed. Complaints of different kinds, especially a suspicion of treason towards the government, caused my predecessors to entertain some antipathy towards him, so much so that I propose to give him no employment for the future. . . .

I received a letter from him this year in which he asks to come back to the Province of Quebec. After the disadvantageous opinion that the government has formed of him, I cannot prudently consent to his return. Nevertheless, if you judge it proper to continue him as a missionary, I ratify in advance all that you may be pleased to ordain therein either in regard to him or to other missionaries now or in the future. Observe, please, that Mr. de la Valinière is a man of very good morals but that, as we have experienced in Canada, his turbulent spirit is capable of causing much trouble to his confrères. As for Detroit, I shall continue to send missionaries there as heretofore.

I have the honor to subscribe myself, with sincere veneration, in union with your holy Sacrifices, Sir, your humble and obedient servant,

✠ JEAN FRANÇOIS,  
*Bishop of Quebec.*<sup>47</sup>

Leaving all these "stirs" in the American Church unsettled behind him in the summer of 1790, Carroll was on his way across the Atlantic to be consecrated. In his letter "in mari" of July, 1790, he mentioned in particular the disturbed condition of the Church in Boston, owing to a faction that refused to accept as pastor Father John Thayer, who had arrived in Boston, in January, 1790. From London, on July 30, 1790, he again addressed Antonelli relating the sad condition of affairs in Boston caused by Poterie. If Poterie had, as he has heard, written to Propaganda against him, it is unfortunate, because Carroll left behind him at Baltimore, all the documents bearing on the case. If it was necessary, on his return, he promised to send copies of these letters to the Cardinal-Prefect.<sup>48</sup> On August 14, 1790, Cardinal Antonelli wrote to Carroll, informing

<sup>47</sup> *Archiepiscopal Archives of Quebec, l. c.*, printed in the *Records*, vol. xviii, pp. 156-157.

<sup>48</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scrittura riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 390. These letters will be discussed in detail in that part of the biography dealing with Carroll's voyage and consecration.



him of the contents of Poterie's infamous letter of January 6, 1790, and assuring him that Propaganda did not consider it worthy of attention; but lest Poterie should mistake Rome's silence for approval, an answer was to be sent. Carroll was warned to avoid everything which might give occasion to such charges, and to be very careful in his acceptance of foreign clergymen.<sup>49</sup> Antonelli's reply to Poterie is of this same date (August 14, 1790). The Cardinal-Prefect takes Poterie to task for his unfounded charges against Father Carroll, and warns Poterie that his disgraceful record in Europe was well known to Propaganda. Poterie was told to exercise no spiritual power in the United States without Bishop Carroll's express consent. The Cardinal-Prefect strongly advised the rebellious priest to leave America and return to his diocese in France—"satius hortatu meo faceres, si American desereres et in Galliam remeares. Deus tibi saniora consilia in mentem inducat."<sup>50</sup>

It is sad to think that Bishop Carroll's peace during his consecration at Lulworth, on August 15, 1790, should be disturbed by these scurrilous charges and that in the midst of receiving his old friends and of being entertained by them, he should be obliged to return to the subject in his letter of August 28, 1790, which carried the good news to Antonelli that he had been duly consecrated. He was happy, however, in being able to report that Poterie had secretly departed from Boston—"quem gaudeo aëro alieno oppressum clam ex America decessisse, atque ita missionem iniquo ac scandaloso operario liberatam."<sup>51</sup> A final mention of Poterie occurs in Carroll's letter to Antonelli, before his departure from England, dated London, September 27, 1790.<sup>52</sup>

Harmony, however, was not to be restored to the distracted Boston Church under Father John Thayer until 1792, when Father Matignon was appointed to that congregation. The entire incident is filled with significance for one who wishes to make an accurate estimate of Carroll's courage and vision in the presence of these intruders and *vagabundi*, who disturbed the peace of the Church in every large Catholic centre during his episcopate.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, *Lettere*, vol. 258, f. 497.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, *l.c.*, f. 496.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, *l.c.*, f. 542.

<sup>52</sup> HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, p. 690.

## CHAPTER XVII

(1784-1790)

### CARROLL AND THE CLERGY

Two changes occurred in the history of the American clergy during these five years of Carroll's Prefectship. The first was the gradual dominance of the "newcomers" in every section of the country, outside of Maryland. The second was the growing realization of the necessity of episcopal government. This latter development had reached its most important stage *pari passu* with the growth of the clergy problems during the year 1788-89.

There were twenty-four American priests, and two "newcomers" under Carroll's jurisdiction, when he accepted the onerous post of the Prefectship in 1785. Shea tells us that: "The nineteen priests in Maryland were apparently Very Rev. John Carroll, Prefect-Apostolic; Rev. John Lewis, Bohemia; Rev. James Walton, at St. Inigoes; Rev. Henry Pile, Newport; Rev. Benedict Neale, Rev. Ignatius Matthews, at St. Thomas' Manor; Revs. J. Ashton, Sylvester Boarman, Port Tobacco; Rev. Leonard Neale; Rev. Charles Sewall, Baltimore; Rev. Joseph Mosley, St. Joseph's; Revs. Augustin Jenkins, John Bolton, Francis Beeston, Lewis Roels, Thomas Digges, Bernard Diderick, John Boone; Rev. James Frambach, at Fredericktown. The five in Pennsylvania were Revs. Robert Molyneux, Ferdinand Farmer, Philadelphia; James Pellentz, Conewago; Luke Geissler, Lancaster; and John B. de Ritter, Goshenhoppen."<sup>1</sup>

As we have already seen, in his *Relation* to Antonelli (March, 1785) Carroll expressed his fears of the danger there was to the infant Church of America in the coming of unworthy shepherds from Europe. "I am convinced," so runs the *Relation* "that the Catholic faith will suffer less harm, if for a short time there is no priest at a place, than if living as we do among fellow-

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<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 260 note.

citizens of another religion, we admit to the discharge of the sacred ministry, I do not say bad priests, but incautious and imprudent priests." There is nowhere among Carroll's papers an official Clergy List for 1785, but this little band of apostles deserves a place of the highest honour in the history of the Church in this country. The chief events of their lives, so far as they are known, must be sought in various sources, and an accurate account of each one of them is at present impossible.<sup>2</sup>

The following tentative sketch may be of value :

*List of American Clergy in 1785.*

ASHTON, Rev. John. Born in Ireland, May 3, 1742; entered the Society of Jesus, on September 7, 1759; was sent to Maryland, where he arrived in November, 1767; for thirty-nine years was in charge of Whitemarsh mission; died February 4, 1815. He did not re-enter the Society after the Restoration.

BEESTON, Rev. Francis. Born in England, June 15, 1751; entered the Society at Ghent,<sup>3</sup> September 7, 1771; taught at Liège after the Suppression; probably ordained in England; came to Maryland in 1786; was appointed assistant to Father Molyneux, in 1786; became pastor of St. Mary's, Philadelphia, in 1788. Foley says there is no record of his ministry after 1790, and Hughes states that he survived the Restoration, but did not re-enter the Society. Kirlin says that he retired to Bohemia Manor in 1790, and died there in 1809. He died, however, in Baltimore. He was secretary to the First Synod of Baltimore. A biographical sketch of Fr. Beeston by Bishop Carroll will be found in Kingston's *New American Biographical Dictionary*, pp. 40-41 (Balto., 1810). He was pastor of St. Peter's Church, Baltimore, when Bishop Neale was consecrated there, December 8, 1800, and was one of the managers of the lottery for the Cathedral in 1806.

BOARMAN, Rev. John. Born in Maryland, January 27, 1743; entered the Society of Jesus, September 7, 1762; after the Suppression he re-

<sup>2</sup> E.g., FOLEY, *Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus*, in twelve series, of five volumes, with a supplementary volume on the English College, Rome, and two further volumes (vol. vii, in two parts) entitled *Collectanea or Biographical Notices*, etc. London, 1877-1883; OLIVER, *Collections*, etc. London, 1857. HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Text, vol. i, pp. 3-7, gives a list of sources for this purpose, and his Text, vol. ii, pp. 676-704 (appendix F) contains a biographical account of the Jesuits who laboured in America from 1634 to the Suppression. The *Researches* (see *Index*) contain much biographical material; there is a contemporary clergy-list in DILHET's manuscript, *État de l'Église on du Diocèse des États-Unis*, which has recently been translated by the Rev. Dr. Browne, of the Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C., and which is now in course of publication.

<sup>3</sup> GRIFFIN, *Researches*, vol. xxiv, p. 284, says that Father Beeston was not a Jesuit, but came to this country with letters of introduction from Lady Arundell to Carroll.

turned to Maryland, arriving there March 21, 1774. His name is signed to the Act of Submission of the American Jesuits. Shea does not give his name in the list. Foley says he died in Maryland, in 1794. Hughes quotes a necrology which states that he died in 1797. He was one of the subscribers to Mathew Carey's *Catholic Bible* in 1789, and is placed on the list as living then at Newtown. Thomas says he died in 1794 (p. 24).<sup>4</sup>

BOARMAN, Rev. Sylvester. Relation of above, not his brother as is commonly believed; born in Maryland, November 7, 1746; entered the Society of Jesus, September 7, 1765. Foley says: "At the time of the Suppression, he was studying philosophy at Liège; and, returning to Maryland, was ordained, and became a missionary." He must have been ordained before setting out for America, where he arrived the same day with John Boorman. He attended the First General Chapter at Whitemarsh, on June 1783. Shea places him at Port Tobacco in 1785. Father Boorman was one of the Committee of Five that replied to the Southern District Remonstrance, in 1786. He was present at the First Synod (1791). He joined the restored Society in 1806. Hughes says his death occurred at St. Thomas', Newtown, January 7, 1811. Thomas questions the fact that he was a Jesuit (p. 17).

BOLTON, Rev. John. Born on October 22, 1742; entered the Society of Jesus on September 7, 1761; was sent to Maryland in 1771. His name is in the Act of Submission, and his residence at the time, according to Shea, was Port Tobacco. He was present at the Synod of 1791. He joined the restored Society in 1806, and died September 2, 1809. (Another catalogue gives his death as occurring in 1805.)

BOONE, Rev. John. Born in Maryland, April 18, 1735; entered the Society of Jesus at Watten, September 7, 1756. In 1765, he was sent to the Maryland-Pennsylvania mission. Five years later, August 5, 1770, he went to England, and in 1784, returned to Maryland. Shea incorrectly lists him among the American Jesuits at the time of the Suppression here. Father Boone was one of the two American priests to whom Bishop Talbot refused to give faculties in 1783, when they were setting out for Maryland. He died at St. Ignatius Mission, April 27, 1795.

DIDERICK, Rev. John Baptist. Born in Luxembourg, probably in 1726; entered the Society of Jesus in 1745; was sent to Maryland, in 1769 or 1771; in 1775, was assigned to Baltimore; was a leader in the Chapters of the clergy, and an opponent to the School Project and to Carroll's nomination to the episcopate. He died at Notley Hall, July 5, 1793. He is given as *Bernard Diderick* in the Act of Submission of 1774, and he used also the *alias*, Rich. Hughes is the authority for his Christian names, John Baptist, but he is best known as Bernard.

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. C. F. THOMAS, *The Genealogy of the Boorman Family*. Baltimore, 1897.

DIGGES (or DIGGS), Rev. Thomas. Born in Maryland, January 5, 1711; entered the Society of Jesus at Watten, September 7, 1729; was professed of the four vows in 1747. Returned to Maryland, probably in 1749, and laboured in the Maryland-Pennsylvania mission; was Superior for a term. He died at Mellwood, February 5, 1805.

FARMER, Rev. Ferdinand—*see* STEINMEYER.

FRAMBACH, Rev. James. Born in Germany, January 6, 1729; entered the Society of Jesus, October 19, 1744; arrived in Maryland June 9, 1758. Shea calls him Augustine and James. His name is among those who signed the Act of Submission. Shea places him at Frederick, Md., in 1774. He was shot at several times by bigots. Father Frambach purchased the ground for the church in Hagerstown, on August 16, 1786. He is mentioned specially for financial reasons in the Second General Chapter of 1786. In April 1788, he retired from Frederick. He was a Vicar-General under Bishop Carroll after 1790, and is said to have died at St. Ignatius', August 26, 1795.

GEISSLER, Rev. Luke. Born in Germany, in 1735; entered the Society of Jesus in 1756; transferred to the English Province and sent to Maryland in 1766 (another catalogue says 1769); before the Suppression, he was in charge of the Lancaster mission; in 1774 he signed the Act of Submission, being then stationed at Conewago; in 1780, he was at Conewago, and died there on August 10, 1786.

JENKINS, Rev. Augustine. Born in Maryland, January 12, 1742; entered the Society of Jesus, September 7, 1766; arrived in Maryland, according to Hughes, May 24, 1776 (Foley says 1774); his name is signed to the Act of Submission as being but recently arrived; in 1781, he was stationed at Newtown; his name is among the subscribers to Mathew Carey's *Catholic Bible* (1789). He does not seem to have been present at the Synod of 1791, and his death is given as occurring at Newtown, February 2, 1800.

LEWIS, Rev. John, the Superior of the Jesuit mission in the United States at the time of the Suppression. Born in Northamptonshire, England, September 19, 1721, educated at St. Omer's College; entered the Society of Jesus, September 7, 1740; professed, says Foley, in 1758, and sent that year to Maryland Mission; was at Whitmarsh at the time of the Suppression, his name being second in the Act of Submission; acted as Vicar-General of Challoner during the Revolutionary War; resigned the Superiorship on Carroll's appointment; "a person free from every selfish view and ambition," as Carroll styles him; was passed over by Propaganda for the Superiorship in 1784, on account of "his advanced age;" is mentioned by Shea, as residing at Bohemia in 1785. He died at Bohemia in 1788, either on March 24 or May 24.

MATTHEWS, Rev. Ignatius. Born in Maryland, January 25, 1730; entered the Society of Jesus, September 7, 1763, "being already a priest" (Foley); in 1766 was sent to the Maryland Mission; at the time of the Suppression, he was at Newtown; his name is found in the



Act of Submission; he succeeded Father George Hunter who died at Port Tobacco, on June 16, 1779; took a prominent part in the General Chapters; was one of the Committee of Three, with Diderick and Mosley, appointed in 1784 to petition the Holy See against the appointment of a bishop; in 1785, he was at St. Thomas' Manor; he received one vote in the election which gave to Carroll the bishopric. He died May 11, 1790.

MOLYNEUX, Rev. Robert. Born near Formby, Lancashire, England, July 24, 1738; entered the Society of Jesus, September 7, 1757; soon after his ordination was sent to Maryland, probably in 1770; was appointed pastor of the church in Philadelphia, June, 1773; his name is in the Act of Submission; was still pastor in Philadelphia in 1785; had an important share in persuading the Holy See of the necessity of episcopal jurisdiction; in the subscription list for Carey's *Catholic Bible* (1789), his residence is given as Bohemia, where he had gone in 1788; acted as Vicar-General of the Southern District for Bishop Carroll, and as such took part in the Synod of 1791; joined the restored Society of Jesus in 1806; had been made President of Georgetown College 1791-1796, and in 1806 resumed that position; was appointed first Superior of the restored Society of Jesus in the United States, on February 22, 1806. He died, says Shea, December 9, 1809—exact date being a year earlier.

MOSLEY, Rev. Joseph. Born in Lincolnshire, England, in November 1731; educated at St. Omer's; entered the Society of Jesus at Watten, September 7, 1748; in 1759, he was in charge of the Bromley (England) mission; was sent to Maryland, probably in 1764 (another catalogue gives the date of his arrival as January 11, 1766); one of the best known of the Maryland missionaries, having laboured at Newtown, St. Thomas' Manor, and Newport, before being placed in residence at Tuckahoe; his name is among those who signed the Act of Submission; refused to take the oath of allegiance presented by the Maryland Legislature in 1778, and was the object of a special act of that body in 1780; was one of the Committee of Three opposed to the bishopric; died on June 3, 1787. Foley says he went under the *alias* of Joseph Framback.

NEALE, Rev. Benedict. Born in Maryland, August 3, 1709; entered the Society of Jesus, September 7, 1728; came to Maryland about 1740; his name is in the Act of Submission of 1774; Shea places him at St. Thomas' Manor in 1785. He died at Newtown, March 20, 1787.

NEALE, Rev. Leonard. (Second Archbishop of Baltimore.) Born in Maryland, October 15, 1747; entered the Society of Jesus at Ghent, September 7, 1767; spent some years in the mission of Demarara; came to Maryland in April, 1783; appointed Rector of Georgetown College; elected coadjutor to Bishop Carroll and appointed Bishop of Gortyna; consecrated at Baltimore, December 7, 1800. Succeeded Archbishop Carroll, December 3, 1815. Died June 18, 1817.

PELLENTZ, Rev. James. Born in Germany, January 19, 1727. Entered the Society of Jesus on October 19, 1744. Professed 1756; sent to

Maryland in June, 1758. Foley (*Collect.*, vol. I, p. 580) says that he "remained until the Suppression in 1773." He died at Conewago, February 13, 1800.

PILE, Rev. Henry. Born in Maryland, May 24, 1743. Entered the Society at Watten, September 7, 1761; in 1771, he was labouring in the mission of Yorkshire. He returned to Maryland in 1784, after being refused faculties by Bishop Talbot, because he was an American. Died at Newtown, February 18, 1813. Foley says 1814. Did not re-enter the Society.

RITTER, Rev. John Baptist De. Born in Germany. An exile from his province, he was aggregated to the English Province about 1763. Came to Maryland in 1765. Died at Goshenhoppen, February 3, 1787.

ROELS, Rev. Louis, *alias* Rousse. Born at Watten, Belgium, November 22, 1732. Probably nephew of Rev. Charles Roels, Vice-Provincial of the English Jesuit Province. Entered novitiate, September 7, 1753. Arrived in Maryland, June 24, 1761; died at St. Thomas', February 27, 1794.

SEWALL, Rev. Charles. Born in Maryland, July 4, 1744; studied at St. Omer's College; entered the Society of Jesus, September 7, 1764; arrived in Maryland, May 24, 1774. Was Rector of St. Peter's Pro-Cathedral, Baltimore; died there November 10, 1806.

STEINMEYER, Rev. Ferdinand. Better known by the name of Farmer; born in Germany, October 13, 1720; entered Society of Jesus under cognomen of Farmer, September 20, 1743; professed February 2, 1761; assigned to English Province in 1751; sent to Maryland in 1758, and died in Philadelphia, August 17, 1786.

WALTON, Rev. James. Born (in Maryland ?), June 10, 1736; entered the Society, September 7, 1757; arrived in Maryland, May 2, 1766; was in charge of mission of St. Inigoes, when Carroll laid the cornerstone of new church there, July 13, 1785. Died in 1803.

All these priests under Carroll's jurisdiction had been members of the suppressed Society of Jesus. Many of them have already appeared in these pages and their names will continue to appear until the end of Carroll's life. It is easy to misunderstand their anomalous situation; and it would be very easy to be prejudiced against them and against their policies, as exhibited in their correspondence and in the proceedings of their General Chapters (1783-1786-1789), unless that situation were made clear. There is much discussion, in all that is extant in our archives for these early years of the American Church, about the old Jesuit properties. They seem to have been over-anxious at all times regarding the preservation of their estates; and, unless the condition in which they actually lived be understood, it is inevitable that

some should read a tendency to sacrifice the spiritual interests of the Church here to material profit and gain into the opposition among them to the educational plans of Carroll and to the establishment of a stricter and fuller canonical rule in this country. And yet such a conclusion would be far from the truth. One thought, one desire, predominated in the hearts of all of them, Carroll included; and that was the restoration of the Society of Jesus in the United States. Whatever might be said of Jesuit life and Jesuit activity in the old world, there was nothing in the lives of these pioneers of the Cross in America but hardships, privations, and sacrifices. All of them had received an education second to none in Europe. They were mostly from well-to-do families in the colonies of Maryland and Pennsylvania or from good European stock. Their very profession in the Society was equivalent to high social and intellectual standing in centres like Liège, Paris, London and Rome. Harassed by penal restrictions in the colonies, always keenly sensitive of the bigotry that was ever latent and oftentimes evident in the colonial life around them, with their flocks scattered and timorous of Protestant neighbours to whom the laws on the statute books gave a medley of ways of disturbing their religious peace, they bore the brunt of the struggle for the Faith with a tactfulness and a courage remarkable in Christian history. As the years gathered upon the little Society in the colonies, good and pious Catholics made them beneficiaries in their wills, bequeathing to them land, cattle, and money for the purpose of keeping the Faith alive in the American mission. In the Catholic Church such bequests take on a sacred character. Their purpose becomes sacrosanct, and it is the solemn duty of those in charge of such estates to guard them from misappropriation or misapplication. All in all, the Jesuits in 1785 did not possess much of this world's goods, but it was sufficient to provide a comfortable maintenance to the missionaries and to carry out many charitable and educational works besides. One thing alone would have solved every difficulty in the Church at that time; would have resurrected the old spiritual power of the Superior which had been sufficient to keep the Church ever progressing; would have given them heart to have a novitiate, however small, begun at home for the continuance of the labourers in the American vineyard; and with extra-

sacerdotal powers, such as the power of Confirmation, would have enabled them to go on for a decade or more successfully withstanding the danger of loss from within and the danger of suppression from without—and that was the restoration of the Society. One group never lost its hope that the restoration was always near. Another group, of which Carroll was one, hoped as strongly for the restoration, but felt that the temper of things being as they were, they had to be up and doing, by consolidating themselves and their estates under a recognized chief. Delay was dangerous, and no one saw the dangers in delay more clearly than Carroll himself.

These dangers touched particularly the preservation of the old Jesuit property. The fact that the priests were not (1785) incorporated under the law of Maryland was a constant source of worry, and Carroll makes frequent mention in his letters to Antonelli of the progress they were making in this regard. Carroll's *Plan of Organization* (1782) states quite frankly that the meeting of the clergy that he recommended, and which took place at Whitmarsh the following year, had as its object and end, "the preservation of the Catholic clergy's estates from alienation, waste and misapplication." Such an incorporation, he points out, would enable them to obtain more priests for the missions and to found other churches. Moreover, it would be a means of controlling the labourers of the vineyard in such a way that no man should eat "the bread of idleness." Before the Suppression, incorporation as a body was not necessary, even though it had been possible under the law, because everything was "conducted smoothly under the government of our Superiors, [and] we did not trouble ourselves with considering the many checks and restraints provided by the Constitutions against any abuse of power." But the present generation of priests would soon be gone, and with the Society no longer existing, provision must be made—the sooner, the better—for the future. Carroll's view of the Chapter Meeting of 1783-84 was that by incorporating themselves into a body, they would not only preserve the properties from mismanagement but would also establish regulations "tending to perpetuate a succession of labourers in this vineyard, to preserve their morals, to prevent idleness, and to secure an

equitable and frugal administration of our temporals.”<sup>5</sup> The field for work he calls immense, and he saw “innumerable Roman Catholics” who would go out into the new regions bordering in the Mississippi, and “impatiently clamorous for clergymen to attend them.” Hence, the way was clear: either accept all the newcomers who would enter the country, or establish a college “for the education of youth, which might at the same time be a seminary for future clergymen.” So far as the newcomers were concerned, Carroll and his fellow-priests were glad to welcome worthy priests, but their experience, even before the opening of the First General Chapter in June, 1783, had not been a felicitous or encouraging one. Fathers Whelan and Nugent, the first two newcomers to be employed in the missions, had set the whole country discussing the shame of their invidious quarreling. And certainly, Carroll’s experience with the newcomers, with hardly more than a few exceptions, was not conducive to seeing, in their multiplication, a solution of the problem of clergy scarcity.

It is for this reason that these years of Carroll’s superiorship over the Church in the United States have all the appearance of a highly complicated misunderstanding all around. The unfortunate limitation of his powers, blunder as it was, and by no means made, as he found out later, with the knowledge of the Cardinal-Prefect of Propaganda, only heightened the feeling of uneasiness that the Roman officials were simply postponing the confiscation of their estates. Father Carroll had been very outspoken in this matter, as we have already seen; and the guarded way he describes the property in his *Letter* and *Relation* is in accord with this sentiment. They all recognized the grave obligation of providing for a succession of labourers, and hence the necessity of protecting the old Jesuit property from mismanagement and misapplication by one of their own, from mortmain proceedings by a none too favorable State legislature, and from seizure by outside agencies. Among these outside agencies, the fear of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide predominated.

The infant Church was not left in peace in these earliest days of its organization. Troubled by the lack of legal protection for the church property in their possession, the little band of priests, while not suffering any appreciable temporal disadvantage

<sup>5</sup> HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, pp. 610-614.



in having been members of a suppressed Society, were soon to experience that bitterest of trials—calumnies from those of their own calling. Two of these deserve special mention here if only because of their unprincipled charges. The first is that by the Rev. Patrick Smyth, in a book entitled: *The Present State of the Catholic Missions conducted by the Ex-Jesuits in North America*, published at Dublin, in 1788. Father Smyth was parish-priest of Dunboyne, at the time of Bishop Butler's defection in 1787. Taking advantage of some family matters in America, he resigned his parish and came to the United States. He was stationed in the fall of 1787 at Frederick, Maryland, succeeding Father Frambach. On March 15, 1788, he wrote to Father Carroll saying that he intended to come to Baltimore, to resign his faculties and to return to Ireland. In this letter, asking for an *Exeat*, Smyth says: "Not a step do I go but I meet with some fresh token of your liberality; but the load is become so heavy, that I cannot possibly bear it. I will run away. That, you will say, is ungenerous and cowardly. I cannot help it. I must go back to Ireland. . . . I will resign my faculties into your hands and return to Europe with a deep sense of your many kindnesses."<sup>6</sup> Then follows a paragraph on the discourtesy shown to him when he visited the houses of the "English" Catholics in his mission. They did not hesitate to show him that he was unwelcome because of his Irish parentage and education. In this respect Smyth names personally, Mr. Henry Darnall, Carroll's relation, who was particularly inhospitable. Father Carroll answered this letter on April 8, 1788, from Rock Creek, telling the sensitive priest that he had undoubtedly taken offense without cause;<sup>7</sup> but Smyth's mind was made up on the question and he came to Baltimore, where Father Carroll entertained him for a month before he sailed for Europe. After his departure, a letter penned by Smyth for a Mr. Robert Welsh, of Fells Point, but unmistakably written for Carroll's eyes, was handed to the prefect-apostolic:

*Dear Sir:*

Just on the point of parting with our pilot and going to sea, I beg leave once more to salute you, and to thank you for your civility. The

<sup>6</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 8B-G6.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, Case 9-S10.

letter which I left in the care of Mr. McGrath for you, will open to your mind a singular scene: Such a one as I certainly never would have noticed, were it not for the great cause which is concerned. Within the narrow circle of my own acquaintance I know six or seven priests, who would willingly undertake to relieve their suffering brethren in America, and who are deterred from coming hither, because they know too well the partiality which exists in favour of a certain description of ecclesiastics [the Jesuits]. Much gratitude is due to the Jesuits, who have in America, and indeed everywhere else, been at once an ornament and a firm pillar of the church and as an individual who venerates their ashes, I sincerely wish for their restoration. But shall the good of religion be neglected, until that event, however desirable takes place? This is not the language of sedition. If I were so inclined, it is to Mr. Ryan, and not to Mr. Welsh, I would thus open my mind.

It has been industriously circulated in America, that the Irish *secular* clergy would crowd to this country, to make their fortunes. Those who for sinister views have propagated the report, know very little of our clergy, or knowing it, they have foully misrepresented them. It was not by seeking the good things of this life, that the Irish clergy have preserved their country from perversion, in spite of the combined efforts of misery and persecution.

I intended to fill up the remainder of this bad paper, but the pilot's boat is in waiting. I must therefore bid you farewell; wishing you from my heart every happiness, I remain

*Dear Sir, Your friend and servant,*

6th May, 1788.

SMYTH.

On reading this letter, Carroll realized that the American Church had unconsciously harboured its first dangerous enemy. He feared that all the stirs and squabbles, the violent pamphleteering and the vicious personal attacks which had disgraced the Jesuit-Secular controversy in England on this very charge of retaining the best places for themselves and of regarding the Irish clergy as mere labourers in the vineyard, would be transferred to the United States. And the truth is that only the wisdom of Archbishop Troy saved the American Church from this plague. The *Present State* contained nothing new to those who were familiar with the conflict in England, but Father Carroll

felt sensibly the prejudice this virulent pamphlet would create among the clergy of Ireland, to which body he looked for priests to minister to their countrymen already emigrating in large numbers to America. He resolved to prepare a reply, and actually began one. The rough unfinished draft still exists, but letters from Archbishop Troy and other

members of the hierarchy in Ireland, as well as from priests, who advised him to take no notice of it, induced him to lay aside his projected answer. Smyth's turbulent character was not unknown in Ireland; he was soon involved in a controversy with Dr. Plunkett, Bishop of Meath, and when after some years he submitted and obtained a parish, he almost immediately became embroiled with his curate.<sup>8</sup>

In a letter to the most prominent Irish priest in America at the time, Father William O'Brien, O. P., dated May 10, 1788, Father Carroll replied to the insidious charge that ex-Jesuits were keeping all the lucrative missions for themselves:

Mr. Smyth who has left us about eight days ago, left ten dollars with Mr. Sewall for his Brs. expenses of which he informed you. The gentleman's insincere and dark manœuvres have come to light since his departure. I gave you notice before, that some circumstances made me fear, he was a prey to suspicion. He wrote me a letter late in March and frequently before acknowledging with the most forcible expressions his grateful sense for the utmost generosity and tender regard, with which he had been treated ever since coming to America; he was with Mr. Sewall and Self, near four weeks waiting for a passage to Dublin, and no attention, I am sure, was wanting for him. On hearing accidentally some conversation in town (which I am convinced was occasioned by him) I brought the gentleman who retailed the conversation, to my house and told Mr. Smyth, what that gentleman and another had said of Smyth's being compelled by bad usage to quit America; and desired him as an honest man, to speak the sentiments of his heart before them. Upon which Smyth repeated, what he had often said to me before, that he was shocked that such reports should be spread; that it was impossible that he would have been treated with more openness and generosity, and enumerated many instances to prove it. Such was his language whenever I called on him. Will you believe after this that this darkman, whose character shall follow him to Ireland, left a letter behind him full of the most groundless insinuations, and betraying a heart so treacherous that I should be afraid of ever placing myself in his power; and that after saying to every person with whom he conversed, that he came not to America to stay in it but only to reclaim his Br., he has now the effrontery to say that he leaves it because he finds that every Priest who has not been a Regular is considered as an intruder.<sup>9</sup>

Father Carroll wrote to Archbishop Troy on August 11, 1788, stating that Father O'Brien had already written to Dublin an account of Smyth's unaccountable conduct.

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 311.

<sup>9</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9-S1; printed in the *Researches*, vol. xiii, pp. 44-47.

I should remain perfectly easy in the self-conviction of having afforded him no cause of dissatisfaction, but quite the contrary; were it not that misrepresentation may deprive this country of the services of some valuable assistance from Ireland. To prevent this, I have written fully to a gentleman of your city, Mr. Mulcalie, whom Mr. O'Brien recommended to me, and with whose character he made me acquainted. I shall desire him to communicate the contents to your Lordship, that you may be convinced, with how little candour Mr. S—— has conducted himself in this business, and that no impressions may be received as if I were not disposed to give employment to as many virtuous and well-informed clergymen as a maintenance can be procured for. But one thing must be fully impressed on their minds, that no pecuniary prospects or worldly comforts must enter into the motives for their crossing the Atlantic to this country. They will find themselves much disappointed. Labour, hardships of every kind, coarse living, and particularly great scarcity of wine (especially out of the towns) must be borne with. Sobriety in drink is expected from clergymen to a great degree. That which in many parts of Europe would be esteemed no more than a cheerful and allowable enjoyment of a friendly company, would be regarded here in our clergy as an unbecoming excess. Your Lordship will excuse this detail, and know how to ascribe it to its proper motive, that gentlemen applying to come to this country may know what to expect.<sup>10</sup>

In January, 1789, Carroll received a copy of Smyth's *Present State* from a Philadelphia publisher, and immediately began the preparation of a reply. The following month, Archbishop Troy wrote saying that it was his opinion and that of his colleagues that the most prudent thing for Carroll was not to answer Smyth's diatribe. Carroll sent a reply to this letter from Dumfries, Va., on July 2, 1789, in which he said that he would draw up a few observations on Smyth's book "for your reading and that of those other Rev. Prelates who have, in a manner so obliging, prevented the intended bad effects of the malicious publication."<sup>11</sup>

Father Carroll's answer to Smyth is still extant, in the original rough copy, in the Baltimore Cathedral Archives.<sup>12</sup> Some of

<sup>10</sup> Printed in MORAN, *Spicilegium Ossoriense*, vol. iii, p. 505. Dublin, 1884 (From the *Dublin Archiepiscopal Archives*).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 504; cf. *Researches*, vol. xiii, p. 158.

<sup>12</sup> Special, Case 6-A1. Printed in the *Researches*, vol. xxii, pp. 194-205. There is little originality in Smyth's pamphlet. The accusations are as old as the controversies centering around Robert Persons, and the geographical descriptions are taken bodily from a work by an author of the same name—J. F. D. SMITH, *A Tour in the United States of America*, two volumes. Dublin, 1784. In vol. i, pp. 114-115,

its paragraphs are worthy of the attention of present-day readers. Though never published, in deference to Archbishop Troy's wishes, Carroll's uncorrected reply is a valuable contemporary source for the state of the Church at this time.

The following pages will be written for the sake of those only who delight more in truth than slander; and who feeling themselves interested in the cause of Religion, think no information beneath their notice, which tends to illustrate its history. When the ministers of the Church are publicly accused of pursuing a system of iniquitous policy, instead of promoting the interests of virtue, the imputation recoils generally on Religion itself. If the imputation be calumnious, the calumny raised against them receives aggravation from the circumstances of its eventually bringing scandal on the cause, with which their reputations are so nearly connected, and the gradation of guilt will be carried much higher, if a Clergyman himself by traducing his Brethren, essentially injure the credit of that sacred cause which he is bound to protect.

Nor is he less guilty who sacrifices to the preservation of some selfish and local interest the happiness of numerous Christians and the extension of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, and for the sake of a particular body of men, to screen them from deserved infamy, and to secure to them an exclusive enjoyment of ease and plenty, refuses to receive fellow-labourers in the vineyard, while he himself with the companions of his indolence beholds it overrun with thorns and briars. Estimating his duty by these principles, the writer of these lines conceives it incumbent on him to assert the honour of Religion by repelling unmerited attacks on its ministers. He will be led unavoidably to give a real statement of some facts, which may prove a better direction to a future historian of the Church, than the pretenders to a——— of registering Ecclesiastical Memoirs. The attacks now to be repelled are grievous indeed, and it is uncertain, whether they would not have been borne in silence, had not a threat been denounced, more injurious to the honour of the ministers of Religion, than even the attacks themselves. It is said that if an answer be made, authentic records are to be produced, capable of shaming the most imprudent liar into silence and that it is owing to the bounty of this tender aggressor, that the extravagant Constitutions of Ecclesiastical government in the United States and certain private documents to be shown in an unguarded moment are not laid before the public.

Disgusting indeed is his prospect, who knowing Mr. Smyth's propensity to literary controversy, is called to a review of his late publication; and they who have experienced the effects of his proneness to suspicion (to say nothing of other more dangerous weapons to which he sometimes resorts) have reason to fear that as soon as one monster is destroyed he

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we find the usual sinister description of the Jesuit estates and of the slaves residing thereon.



will conjure up another to alarm the public concern. Hercules might subdue a Hydra; but it is impossible to exhaust the fecundity of suspicion. What could induce him, a Clergyman, a man of education, who puts in a claim of truth and integrity, to publish to the world what every man in America knows to be void of foundation: that the liberty of the press is liable to be restrained in this country by a violent and opulent party? that no one dares mutter a complaint against a Jesuit, that the Catholic religion was never extended to Pennsylvania before Mr. James sent German missionaries; that poor Catholics instead of removing farther back in quest of plenty and independence are made to hover and starve round the superb seats of the Clergymen and rich squires, conspiring together in a system of oppression? Did he ever visit those superb seats, of which he speaks on the banks of the Potomack? or go to rouse the zeale of the slumbering shepherds, whom he describes as basking in the luxuriant climes of the Eastern shore of Maryland? No; he never saw them, but has trusted to an imagination, pregnant with suspicion, to give colouring to his picture. A word, a hint that he had improved on; and fancy, but not sportive good-natured fancy, has furnished the price.

I presume that considerate men would not deem it criminal in the former missionaries of Maryland, even tho' they were Jesuits, had they honestly built comfortable houses for their retreats, when returning home exhausted with labours, or when age or infirmities rendered labour no longer practicable to them. But either insensibility in their own sufferings or inability, or perhaps, the mismanagement so common to men not trained to the cultivation of landed estates, have in many instances deprived them of even this comfort;—and in contradiction to Mr. Smyth's unwarranted assertions, it is here declared in the case of thousands, who are eye-witnesses to the fact, that of three houses on Potomack ever inhabited by Catholic clergymen, only one enjoys the most ordinary conveniences of a comfortable habitation; that even this with an elegant external appearance, presents no more refined accommodations for the gratification of sensuality, than are found in the families of the middle ranks of Society in America; that the other two houses so far from being superb are mean and despicable; and in other respects as little calculated as the former, for those enjoyments, which are suggested to the reader in the expressions chosen by Mr. Smyth. If curiosity should be excited by his misrepresentation, should it go to the Eastern Shore of Maryland, it will find there but two clergymen. One of these lives on the confines of Maryland and State of Delaware; in a house not only inelegant but ruinous and scarce affording shelter from the weather. The other occupies a cell such as the woman of Sumanite prepared for the prophet Eliseus (4th Book of Kings, c. 4), containing just space enough for a bed, a table and a stool. Such are the establishments formed on the Potomack and the Eastern Shore, and yet preserved for the benefit of Religion by that Society, which could not bury obloquy in the same grave with itself, and whose memory Mr. Smyth, in grateful remembrance of his beloved departed friend of the order is preparing to consign to

perpetual infamy; this he proposes by a new translation (I can inform him, that he is not the first to perform this laudable exploit) of Pascal's letters; that is, of a work, branded as false and calumnious by the most respectable tribunals, civil and Ecclesiastical; and therefore not an improper appendix to the present State of the Catholic Mission.

In reading over this last performance, one is every moment surprised to find, how easily a pretended history may be compiled without any of the materials, which ought to enter into its composition. Does the Rev. Gentleman treat of introduction into the first progress of the Catholic Religion in Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York and Kentucky? Does he pretend to delineate its actual state, and the conduct of those who by profession are its guardians? Instead of authentic history, as might be expected from his self-praised talent of registering Ecclesiastical Memoirs, we meet with little, except mistakes generally springing from malignity, respecting past transactions, to say the least of them, of late occurrences.

Where did he find that a few Jesuits attended by a Treasurer, followed Lord Baltimore at his first settlement of Maryland? I have always understood (and my materials. I think, are to be depended on) that only one Jesuit of the name of White, came first into this country with no other treasure than his virtue and no other means than his zeal of preserving the infant colony in the Religion which he brought from Europe; that he returned to England after spending some years in America; and having collected a few fellow labourers, he revisited it again, and that the successors of these first missionaries have continued to this day to labour in the vineyard which they planted, and to be the instruments of Divine Providence in enlarging it.

Mr. Smyth laments that they have been so indolent, or so unenterprising, as to confine their feeble services to Maryland alone, that not a single effort of consequence was made by them—to extend their missions to their neighbours, or even to assist with any degree of regularity the back countries of Maryland.

How true this is will be seen thereafter. But were it even so, that they confined themselves to the limits assigned by Mr. Smyth, what cause of reproach can he find in this? Few in number as the English Jesuits always were, unable even to supply the demands of their parent country, and much less those of Maryland; bound by the ties of Gratitude and justice to devote their services to that province for the sake of which they obtained their livings in it; did it belong to them to leave the Catholics of Maryland without pastors, and go, in defiance of their sacred duties, into the neighbouring provinces where no Catholics dwelled, or, at least, none professed their religion? Was it in the opinion of this Rev. Gentleman, a crime in the Jesuits, to leave the harvest of their countries free to the workmen, who never disposed to labour in it? Did they put obstacles in the way between England or Ireland, and New England, New York, Virginia, and the two Carolinas? Why did not this country which could not suffer by sparing a few supernumerary priests, send them forth to the assistance of those abandoned provinces?

Why did not they, like the first Jesuits of Maryland encounter poverty and wretchedness to spread and preserve the true faith, and thus by patience and perseverance found useful establishments of Religion? Were the pains and deaths denounced against Catholic Clergymen presuming to enter these provinces, sufficient to damp their zeal? Would not the venerable Dr. Challoner and his predecessors, Bishops of the London district, have joyfully concurred in seconding their Apostolick enterprises had any been formed?

Were those worthy prelates withheld by any imagination of the Jesuits from extending their solicitude to so great a portion of the countries under their charge?

But no such enterprises were formed. The Jesuits were not in sufficient number, and Mr. Smyth ought to say what kept dormant the zeal of others. Since the dissolution of the Society some have come forward across the Atlantic; and if suspicion were as congenial to others as to him, they might invent some plausible reasons for this new appearance of zeale. However, that may be, the public ought to be informed that the few surviving ex-Jesuits owe to Religion one more service in addition to those which they have already rendered in Maryland, and that is to secure from waste and misapplication, and to transmit undiminished to the future ministers of the Church, the property, which was acquired for its advantage, and preserved by their predecessors.

Of this their sincere attachment to the cause, which they served so long, the journals of the Assembly of Maryland bear ample testimony; with whose concurrence they hope to see their views carried soon and finally into effect. Had these Ex-Jesuits been such as Mr. Smyth represents them, deaf to the voice of conscience and eager to share the spoils, what could have hindered them from converting their lands and negroes into portable property, as soon as the Society was destroyed, and enjoying in indolence the fruit of their sacrilegious plunder? With the same laudable view of fixing a stigma on the ministers of Religion in Maryland, our church historian says that the Catholic Religion ceased from being an established Religion in Maryland. (I wonder from what register of Ecclesiastical Memoirs he learnt this curious fact, unknown before that it ever was the established Religion.) That the Marylanders branched out into various forms of worship, while the great body of the Irish had invariably adhered to the Religion of their Fathers. This the reader cannot but understand a delicate stroke of the gentleman's pen at those pastors of whom he somewhere says, that they are slumbering in the vineyard.

But if indeed they have slumbered more than others, it is a consolation to know, that Providence has graciously interposed to prevent in great measure the bad effects which would naturally arise from their drowsiness. For it is notorious that few of original Catholic Families of Maryland, which did not emigrate to the other parts of America, have abandoned their religion; and many others have embraced it. They are reduced much indeed in point of prosperity and liable to carelessness and extrava-

gance; and because during the prevalence of the British Empire, they were most iniquitously excluded from the favours of government and even from professing the most lucrative employments, their numbers have daily increased and their congregations have multiplied.

But Mr. Smyth says there is no vestige of Catholic Religion in Annapolis, the capital of Maryland. In vain will the traveller seek for such a monument of the zeal of its ministers and first planters. On this occasion he might at least have given them the credit of not being ambitious to establish themselves near the seats of grandeur such as our country affords, and which I suppose flatter the human mind, in proportion equally with the more splendid greatness of richer and higher polished cities. But the reader will not find Mr. Smyth once deviating from his line of composition into praise and commendation. If he cannot distort a fact into a subject of censure, he will be wholly silent on it. When he pretended to write a sketch of the history of Religion and its ministers, he ought to have known, that while Catholics bore any share or had any influence in the government of Maryland, the town of St. Mary and not Annapolis was the capital. A church was built very early near to that, and has been rebuilt again, and subsists to the present day. Under all the discouragement of subsequent times the great body of inhabitants in the neighbourhood (for the town subsists no more), are still of the Religion of their Forefathers, besides many who are gone to people Kentucky. When after the Revolution in England, the seat of government was removed to Annapolis, it was carried into the heart of the Protestant interest. Thither crowded all officers and placemen, among whom no Roman Catholic could be ranked; there sat the Assemblies, which kept always over them a jealous and watchful eye, and sometimes attempted their total suppression. In a small town where every inhabitant was exposed to notice and scarce any settled but with a view to preferment, is it a matter of wonder that our Religion thus discouraged and persecuted, should make little progress? And yet in this very town, and not merely in the neighbourhood as is asserted by our candid and well-informed historian, there has always been and still is a decent chapel visited every month by a clergyman.

With respect to the past and present state of Religion at Baltimore, as well as the other historical scraps gleaned from his registry of Ecclesiastical Memoirs, he is misinformed in, or he misrepresents almost every circumstance. Baltimore began to grow into notice not more than 25 or 30 years ago. Before that it was an inconsiderable village, which afforded neither employment or sufficient living even for a minister of the established church, who derived his living not from the few inhabitants of the town, but from a general tax on people of every denomination in the parish, which comprehended a large portion of Baltimore County. As the town increased, so did the number of Catholics; and through much opposition, and by great constancy both in the Congregation and the Clergyman who occasionally visited it, they were amongst the first to build a small church, which is now receiving considerable enlargement. A



house for the residence of a Clergyman was added some years after chiefly by the contributions of the congregation: the better informed Mr. Smyth says, it was done at the private expense of a Jesuit in order to claim the property on a future occasion.

He concludes his account on the State of Religion in Baltimore by some injurious reflections on the Rev. Gentleman, who officiates for the congregations of that place. This is his return generosity for the continued civilities and hospitality, with which he was treated for a month by that very gentleman, who needs not my vindication from the groundless aspersions of his Guest. The goodness of his heart; the zeal for the welfare of his flock; his punctuality in his pastoral duties are conspicuous to all, and are not to be heightened by my descriptions of them. As a writer his compositions would have no cause to shrink from the eye of the critic, tho' placed in view of those of his Detractor; he is incapable of uttering a falsehood; and he has solemnly declared to me that he has never used the expressions ascribed to him because he never entertained the sentiments which they convey. But is Mr. Smyth equally entitled to credit; who had the confidence to commit to press, that the Catholic Religion in Baltimore may be assimilated to an almost consumed taper glimmering in the socket? The fact is, that as many witnesses may be produced as there are inhabitants in that town, that thro' the providence of God, our Religion has increased and does greatly increase in numbers. The person who with Mr. Smyth's means of information asserts the contrary, may discover the grounds of his assertions in those malignant passions, which too often agitate the human heart.

Perhaps he hoped to avail himself of the prejudices raised against a late Society; thinking, that if it could but bring ex-Jesuits into view, thousands would be ready enough to believe them capable of every offence, which malignity should be pleased to assign to them. Their time (says this humane man) is employed not in the apostolic functions of instructing the ignorant, of visiting the sick, or catechising with patience and condescension poor unheeded slaves; but in goading those wretched beings, and whipping and almost flaying them alive.

Mr. Smyth knows and should not forget, that a calumniator cannot atone for his guilt, but by making his retraction as public as his offence, and that the weight of his obligation is, at least, commensurate to the heinousness of the slander. Beyond all question reparation is a debt, which he owes to many persons, whose reputation, from the nature of their functions, is of some importance to the community as well as to themselves. This obligation they call on him to discharge; let him think of it, before he presumes again to make his offering on the altar of the God of justice and peace. They deny in the face of all Maryland (I would say of Heaven itself, if Mr. Smyth had not made a most unrighteous appeal to the God of Heaven—at the very moment he was devoting his pen to the office of defamation), they deny his most atrocious charge, a charge equal at least, to that of cool and deliberate murder. They deny that he ever saw one single instance, in any clergyman of



America, of the horrible crime which he imputes generally to them all. On the contrary, they say that a few amongst them are concerned in the management of estates of negroes that they . . . [*sic*] . . . no such avocation from their pastoral duties; that the few to whom this management is committed, treat their negroes with great mildness and are attentive to guard them from the evils of hunger and nakedness; that they work less and are much better fed, lodged and clothed, than labouring men in almost any part of Europe; that the instances are rare indeed, and almost unknown, of corporal punishment being inflicted on any of them who are come to the age of manhood; and that a priest's negro is almost proverbial for one, who is allowed to act without control.

Besides the advantage of this humane treatment, they are instructed incessantly in their duties of Christianity and their morals watched, I may say, with fatherly solicitude. By this treatment they are induced to conceive an attachment for their masters and the habitations of which they have given the strongest evidence. During the late war the British cruisers landed often at and hovered almost continually around the plantations of the clergy; they pillaged their houses; they drove and slaughtered their sheep and cattle. What an opportunity for their slaves to desert from their cruel treatment described by Mr. Smyth.

But how was the fact? While the negroes belonging to the neighbouring plantations were crowding aboard the British ships, those of the Priests, tho' whipped and scourged and almost flayed alive, refused every invitation to go, and even force used to carry them on board. Of the whole number belonging to Clergymen, two only were seduced away, one of them took the first opportunity of returning. The rest either absolutely refused, or ran into the woods to prevent being carried off. The fact alone furnishes the most complete refutation of the charge made by Mr. Smyth. When he seemed to boil with indignation against the crimes, conceived only in his suspicious bosom, are we to consider his expressions as genuine effusions or as the affectation of humanity? Can defamation coexist with humanity? Can we expect the delicate feelings of sympathy, when even justice is violated? Can we suppose that Mr. Smyth will not indulge himself in colouring certain objects too highly?

With the same spirit of bitterness he proceeds to an erroneous history of progress and present State of Religion in Pennsylvania. Like a good Irishman, full of resentments for the evils his country has suffered from England, if he cannot withhold commendation from some Jesuits, he will take care however not to bestow it on English Jesuits. The writer of these sheets owes as little favour to Britain as to Mr. Smyth; but he owes great respect to truth. And truth obliges him to contradict Mr. Smyth, and inform others, what everybody in Philadelphia knows, that the exercise of the Catholic Religion was begun there long before the arrival of any German Jesuits: that the first chapel was opened by the Rev. Greateon, and the new church, in which Mr. Smyth saw divine service performed with so much decorum, was raised by the exertions and under the auspices of the late Rev. Mr. Harding. The relation of Mr. James'

foundation is likewise discordant from the fact. From Mr. Smyth's account one would imagine that Mr. James was a Protestant and lived in America, when he solicited for German Jesuits; the fact was otherwise. He then was a Catholic in England, and had become a Catholic by meeting accidentally with the life of St. Francis Xavier, and afterwards by conversing with the late excellent Dr. Challoner. It is unnecessary to follow thro' all the mistakes in this subject. But he concluded his account of Pennsylvania with an anecdote of which he observes that it may help the main drift of his paper. I think so too. For nothing is more apt to promote the growth of calumny as an anecdote high seasoned with that commodity. Here is the real fact: A year or two before the death of the late Rev. and much revered Mr. Farmer he received information, by letters from Germany, of the character and estimable qualities of Mr. Graessel who had been in the novitiate of the Jesuits at the time of their dissolution. Mr. Farmer wrote to him earnestly inviting him to give his services to that country which he himself had burdened with his sweat and expressing the pleasure he should feel in having a coöperator who had been trained in the same school and discipline as himself. After receiving this letter Mr. Graessel resigned a handsome employment and flattering prospects of preferment, in order to join his venerable correspondent. But when he reached Philadelphia, Mr. Farmer was no more. About the same time arrived likewise from Germany two Capuchin Priests, worthy and able labourers in the Lord's vineyard. The ecclesiastical Superior appointed each to his respective station and nominated Mr. Graessel to remain in Philadelphia. He was induced by several considerations: 1st, Mr. Graessel, in consequence of Mr. Farmer's invitation quitted his employment and prospects in Bavaria bringing with him the original letter of invitation, and in full expectation of remaining at Philadelphia; 2ndly, His education having been the same as that of those who were to be his companions at Philadelphia, and they having expressed their wish for his appointment, the Superior thought so much was due to their services and enjoyment, not to refuse their request. 3d. He thought likewise it was a just way of rewarding the members of that body, who, under God, had brought Religion to its present state in Philad., provided their talents were equal to their charge. Let the Catholics of Philadelphia say, whether Mr. Graessel has not appeared as such. Mr. Smyth says that another Gentleman had recommended himself in Phila. by superior talents at least for preaching. He makes assertions without the least support of truth; neither of the candidates had been heard in Philadelphia, when the appointment was made; and I nearly believe, that one of them has never been heard there, even to this day; though I am sure he would be heard with pleasure. A part of the German Congregation but not the most numerous or little more than the most numerous part, some of whom had contracted a friendship for the worthy son of St. Francis, were dissatisfied with the appointment—they even took some measures, the impropriety of which they themselves afterward avowed; they applied to the Superior for his approbation to build a new church

for their nation, and, as they said to preserve their native tongue. The Superior instantly granted their request. He (Mr. Smyth) adds that the new church will continue a monument of German resentment. For my part I rather trust it will be a monument of German piety. He says that it is only separated by the street from the old one. The eyes of all Philadelphia behold it at least 400 yards distant.<sup>13</sup>

Father Strickland wrote to Carroll from London, April 18, 1788, saying that he has just seen the pamphlet. Smyth's object, he writes, "seems to be to open a free Port for the reception of all Irish Ecclesiastics who may wish to try their fortune in the new world. I make no doubt but you might have a great abundance of priests, if you would be willing to receive all whom the irregularity of their behaviour has made obnoxious to their own country or their indolence has rendered worthless. . . . In my opinion a silent contempt is the only answer it deserves."<sup>14</sup> In the light of subsequent events, however, exception can justly be taken to this policy of silence, advocated by Troy and others. How seriously the charges were viewed where they could do most harm to the American clergy—at Rome—is only too evident from an incident described in Father Thorpe's letter to Carroll of August 8, 1790. The incident centred around the two boys—Felix Dougherty and Ralph Smith—whom Carroll sent to Propaganda in 1787. Cardinal Antonelli actually called the two boys before him and interrogated them for several hours regarding the charges made by Smyth. The boys somewhat relieved his alarms by assuring his Eminence that they had never seen a Jesuit novice in America and had never heard of a Jesuit novice. Father Thorpe was indignant at this manœuvre and told Antonelli it was an unfair proceeding, especially since Dr. Concanen had already informed the cardinal that Smyth's pamphlet was "a scandalous and ill-written work."<sup>15</sup> Father Thorpe warned Carroll that the cardinal's mind still harboured doubts about the ex-Jesuits in America and that, as a result of Smyth's attack, fears were being expressed in Rome that the Americans would restore the Society in the United States in spite of the Brief of Suppression.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> The remainder of the draft is so badly worn that I found it impossible to read it.

<sup>14</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 8B-G7.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, Case 8-K8.

<sup>16</sup> "Patrick Smyth was a man of splendid abilities, of ready and versatile talent,

The second of these attacks on the American clergy has already been referred to: that by La Poterie entitled: *The Resurrection of Laurent Ricci*.

The most serious problem that faced the prefect-apostolic was the necessity of supplying the missions with priests. The first waves of the immense immigration to America—a veritable second migration of the nations—began at the close of the Revolution with the Irish and German elements predominating. To Ireland Carroll looked for assistance in meeting the situation, and though we have only a portion of his correspondence with Archbishop Troy of Dublin, it is evident that the Irish prelate was anxious to assist Carroll in manning the Church here with worthy priests. A new land like America was a serious temptation to priests who were in difficulties at home; and we find Carroll endeavouring to make it obvious to Troy, in a letter dated November 9, 1789, that only pious, worthy and self-sacrificing members of the priesthood, men dominated by zeal and devotion, would be accepted:

*My Lord,*

I did myself the honour of writing a few lines to your Lordship from Virginia, the last of June, or the beginning of July. I then returned my sincere thanks for your great and generous endeavor to discountenance a pamphlet full of falsehood and malignity, and I requested your Grace to be the interpreter of my sentiments of gratitude to the other most Rev. Prelates who joined your Lordship so readily in condemning it.

I lament with your Lordship that there are not more clergymen in the United States. They are large enough, and offer a field wide enough for many more labourers. But unfortunately almost all who offer their services have great expectations of livings, high salaries, &c.; and these our country does not afford. Most of the stations to which salaries are annexed, are occupied; and I find few, or, to speak more properly, I find none willing to commit themselves entirely to the care of Provi-

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but was in disposition restless as a wave; pre-eminently factious and discontented. He officiated in the capacity of pastor in various parts of the diocese, emigrated to America, transferred his services to Dr. Carroll, Bishop of Baltimore, and returned to Meath, choleric and disappointed, angry with himself and with the world, believing all his ecclesiastical superiors to be unmindful of his many perfections, and regarding himself as the most unhappy and ill-treated of men. It was his misfortune, as has happened to others, too, that his bishop had taken too much notice of him, had done too much for him, and had been too ready in making him a confidant. Hence, like many another spoiled ingrate, when thwarted and baffled in his schemes of ambition, even *pro hac vice* he turned on his benefactor and with gratitude worthy of a snake in the fable he stung his best friend, and repaid a life of kindness with insult and calumny." COGAN, *History of the Diocese of Meath*, vol. iii, p. 150. Dublin, 1874.



dence, and seek to gather congregations, and livings, of consequence, by fixing themselves in places where no missionaries preceded them. Your Grace knows, it was thus that religion was propagated in every age of the Church. If clergymen animated with this spirit will offer their services, I will receive them with the greatest cheerfulness, and direct their zeal where there is every prospect of success; and will make no manner of distinction between Seculars and Regulars.<sup>17</sup>

Naturally, the most secure method of supplying the thinned ranks of the clergy was to found a Seminary for the training of native youths. A Seminary involved a College; for, without a classical education, it was impossible to start young men aright in philosophy and later in theology. The founding of Georgetown College had been decided upon at the Second General Chapter of 1786, but it was evident that at least four or five years would be required to complete the plans for the organization of the College. The Bordeaux American College scheme which has so large a share in the letters of 1783-84, seems by this time to have been completely abandoned. If any serious attempt had been decided upon, the French Revolution swept the scheme away. Talleyrand, who was a prime mover in the Bordeaux scheme, went down in the maelstrom and for a time walked the streets of Philadelphia as an exile.

The legislative body for the discipline of the Church during this time was the General Chapter of the Clergy. At the closing session of the First General Chapter of the Clergy (1784) it was decided to call the deputies of the three districts together on October 10, 1787; but owing to the pressing nature of the business which had accumulated, the Chapter was summoned in November, 1786, one year before the appointed date. Three questions needed immediate solution: the incorporation of the Select Body of the Clergy for the purpose of protecting their property rights; the necessity of episcopal jurisdiction in the United States; and the growing demand for a Catholic college. Accordingly, on November 13, 1786, the deputies arrived at Whitemarsh for the business in hand. Father Ignatius Matthews and James Walton represented the Southern District; Fathers Bernard Diderick and John Ashton represented the Middle District. A quorum being present, the Chapter was opened, and

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<sup>17</sup> MORAN, *op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 504.



Father John Carroll was "respectfully entreated to attend." Father Carroll arrived on the 15th; Father Molyneux arrived on the 17th, to represent the Northern District. Rules for the guidance of the Chapter were agreed upon, and thirteen by-laws were drafted and passed. Several matters of minor moment were discussed and regulated, such as property repairs, old debts, the Sir John James Fund,<sup>18</sup> and other financial affairs connected with the London Province, which were still unsettled. A resolution was passed on November 17, that the sum of £210 (currency, about \$560) be allotted annually to the prefect-apostolic, and that the procurator-general (Father John Ashton) be authorized to pay him the same, as long as he resided at Baltimore. On Carroll's retiring from Baltimore, his salary was to continue as before.

Baltimore was not at that time on the direct route between Washington and Philadelphia, and the city was visited from Whitemarsh and Deer Creek occasionally by the missionaries, after 1753. The coming of the Acadians in 1755-56 was the occasion for building a temporary chapel, which is said to have stood at the northwest corner of Calvert and Fayette Streets. In 1764, a lot at Saratoga and Little Sharp Streets was purchased by Father George Hunter, Superior of the Mission, from Charles Carroll, the father of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and some six years later a brick church, known as St. Peter's, was erected on this property. Before its completion, the superintendent, Dr. John McNabb, failed in business and the principal creditor closed the church and instituted a ludicrous suit against Mr. Ganganelli (Pope Clement XIV) to recover the money he had advanced. During the war, a company of Catholic soldiers insisted on having services in the Church, and the creditor in question, being under suspicion of loyalism, surrendered the key. The Catholics of Baltimore regained possession of the Church, and, after the war, raised the amount necessary to liquidate the creditor's claim. Father Diderick, who was prominent in the Second General Chapter

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. GRIFFIN, *The Sir John James Fund* in the *Records*, vol. ix, pp. 195-211; cf. *ibid.*, vol. xxvi, p. 81. An unpublished account of the rise and of the use made of the Sir John James Fund is in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Special C-D13, in a letter from Bishop Francis Patrick Fenwick to the historian, B. U. Campbell, dated, Philadelphia, January 29, 1845.

of 1786 on account of his obstructionist tactics, was in charge of St. Peter's from 1775 to 1784, though not in residence there. The first permanent pastor was the Rev. Charles Sewall, who came to Baltimore in 1784. Father Carroll left Rock Creek in 1786, and took up his residence with Father Sewall at St. Peter's, and the little church served as his pro-cathedral until the erection of the present cathedral, the cornerstone of which was laid on July 7, 1806.<sup>19</sup>

The important subjects for deliberation in the Chapter were the questions of Catholic education and the bishopric. The property question is an involved one bristling with difficulties to all concerned, and it created a legacy of unpleasantness which lasted down to the time of Archbishop Maréchal. Carroll's part in the discussion on the ex-Jesuit property in the United States is a slight one, and on May 22, 1790, as will be seen, he made a formal declaration as bishop-elect that he waived all claims in the matter of managing the Jesuit estates.

The problem of incorporating the clergy into a legal body for the preservation and maintenance of the estates was settled by the appointment of a Committee, consisting of Fathers Carroll, Walton, Matthews, Ashton, Leonard Neale, and Jenkins, to act on the resolutions taken. This Committee was to obtain information, whether it would be safe and expedient to apply to the Legislature for an Act of Incorporation at that time; and Father Carroll was empowered to call a meeting of the Committee at Port Tobacco to decide the question. The members of this Committee decided that the time was then inopportune. The Act of Incorporation was passed six years later.

The Chapter resolutions on the bishopric are the most important passed in that assembly.

1786, November 13-22.

*System of Ecclesiastical Government.*

Whereas it is necessary for the well government of the Roman Catholic Church in the thirteen United States of North America, that certain fundamental principles should be established in the clergy thereof:

1. That the form of spiritual government to which alone they do sub-

<sup>19</sup> FREDERICK, *Old St. Peter's, or the Beginnings of Catholicity in Baltimore*. Balto., 1911.

mit shall be properly episcopal, depending only on the Holy See, in matters essentially belonging and universally acknowledged to belong to the Holy See as its undoubted prerogative.

2. That a diocesan Bishop alone is adequate to the above purpose.

3. That the representatives of the clergy of the United States are the only proper persons to chuse the same.

4. That the proper memorial to be drawn up and sent to his Holiness to represent the present state of the Roman Catholic Church in North America, and the determination of the clergy thereupon.

5. That the present Superior be jointly with two members of the clergy authorized and directed to draw up and send such memorial in behalf of the said clergy and to the above purport.

6. That the two members of the clergy chosen for the above purport [purpose?] are the Rev. Messrs. Rob. Molyneux and John Ashton.

7. That in the meantime the clergy submit to be governed by the present appointed Superior.<sup>20</sup>

Shortly after the adjournment of the Chapter, the following circular letter, dated November 24, 1786, was sent out from Whitemarsh over the signature of Father Charles Sewall, who acted as Secretary, to the clergy of the Republic.

*Rev. Gentlemen and Brethren,*

We agreed it a duty to give you information, not only of all matters agreed on in Chapter, but likewise of the reasons, which moved a majority of us to an important resolution relative to our future Ecclesiastical Government. The matters agreed on are those which appear in the journals of our proceedings; among which you will find a vote directing that a memorial be transmitted to his Holiness, representing that a clergy of these States conceive it as their right, and therefore require to be governed only by an Ordinary Bishop, chosen by themselves and depending in spirituals solely on the Holy See; that, in the meantime of awaiting for his Holiness's answer, they submit to the authority already constituted amongst them.

The reasons operating on a majority of us to adopt this resolution were the following. First, the Clergy of Maryland and Pennsylvania are providentially placed in a position to be greatly instrumental toward spreading the blessing of true religion throughout the whole extent of the United States. In this view we formed the plan of a school of general education for youth; but more especially that it be a nursery of future clergymen, who will, we hope, be sufficient not only to succeed the present labourers, but likewise to extend their zeal as far as the tolerating laws of the other States will allow them. To complete this scheme a Bishop will certainly be necessary. 2ly. We conceive no medium between

<sup>20</sup> HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, pp. 666-667.

an Ordinary Bishop and a Bishop *in partibus*, constituted by and dependent on the Congr. de Propda Fide. We think you will find sufficient reason in the acct. of our Russian Brethren, and in other information you are possessed of, to prefer an Ordinary to a Vicar-Apostolic. Besides our governing powers jealous of all foreign dependance, and our fellow Christians of other denominations, will be confirmed in their prejudices, if we admit for our chief ecclesiastical Superior a person appointed by a foreign Congregation, responsible to them for the exercise of his authority, and removeable at their pleasure. 3dly. The clergy and the faithful here constitute a National Church, protected and sanctioned by law; and they have therefore a right to the same ecclesiastical government, as has ever been used from the days of the Apostles in every National Church. 4ly. There is a very cognizant reason why this matter should be taken up at present. The negotiation will undoubtedly be of some length, and probably the fate of the memorial will not be decided for two or three years. Clergymen not of our Body are coming to America, and the superior, where he finds them qualified, can not in conscience refuse employing them in other States soliciting their assistance. These, as part of the American clergy, will have an equal right to participate in the ecclesiastical government. Can we tell how soon they may be here in sufficient number to carry measures contrary to our wishes and destructive of the good, which our longer experience of the temper and government of America enables us to perform. Have we not reason to fear, that they will be attended to at Rome preferably to ourselves, and their plans adopted? and thus an attempt made to enforce a government, which if we admit, we shall impose a yoke upon ourselves and draw on our religion the inconveniences before mentioned. If we resist this government, dissensions and anarchy will ensue. On this reconsideration we are induced to delay no longer a measure recommended to us from Europe by those, on whose virtue, knowledge and experience we could best rely. We were very careful to consider whether the introduction of episcopacy would prove detrimental, if it should please God to revive our Society; and, so far as conceiving it hurtful to the Society's recovering her rights in this country we are clearly of opinion, that a Bishop chosen by ourselves, while we constitute a majority, would greatly facilitate so desirable an end. Ever since the days of St. Ignatius the Ordinaries throughout Christendom have generally proved favourable to the Society, and for the most part were its protectors and benefactors and in the times of its distress spoke loudly in its favour. We remember the glorious testimonies rendered the Society by the Bishops of France, Italy, and Germany, and even those of Spain. But the Vicars-Apostolical of England, and China, and other eastern countries have always thwarted its children, and by their opposition have oftentimes caused prejudice to religion.

These are the principal reasons which determined our opinions. We doubt not of your approbation and concurrence in a measure suggested by motives so powerful and so pressing. With the greatest respect, and



earnest request to you to beseech Almighty God to render this measure advantageous to religion, we have the honour to be

*The Chapter* <sup>21</sup>

Comment on this letter is unnecessary. But a strong opposition to the establishment of the episcopate as well as to the school was soon manifested by one group of the clergy, who considered both these projects as dangerous to the preservation of the clergy property. The chief opponent to the bishopric was Father Diderick, of the Middle District. He was aided in his opposition by Father Leonard Neale, the future Archbishop of Baltimore, who had arrived in Maryland from Demerara, on April 12, 1783. Father Carroll reported this opposition to his friend Plowden in a letter dated January 22-February 28, 1787, in which he asks Plowden's coöperation in obtaining a president for the school. That part of the letter referring to the bishopric is as follows:

I am sorry to inform you that, since writing the above, an opposition has broken out of some of our good gentlemen against the establishment of a school, and an application for a Bishop. They act from this laudable motive: that both these matters will occasion some alienation of property formerly possessed by the Society, which they wish to restore undiminished to her at her re-establishment; and of this they appear to have no doubt, since they read your Russian history. They positively assert that an appropriation to the school (tho' made by the representative body of the clergy, as has been the case) of estates now possessed by us is a violation of the rights of the Society; thus supposing that a right of property can exist in a non-existing body; for certainly the Society has no existence here. As this objection has arisen with a few, I hope they will soon change their mind, and remember that a very uncertain prospect of the revival of the Society ought not to hinder so essential a service to religion; that the Society was instituted to save souls; and that souls were not made subservient to the temporal benefits of the Society. You must know that, when we established a form of government for our temporal concerns, we severally promised each other, that, if it pleased God to restore the Society in this country, we would surrender back into her hands her former property. Personal property may be disposed of with greater ease. The few gentlemen who have objected have considered the promise of re-delivery to the Society; but have not attended to the power especially granted to Chapter. I make no doubt but, as soon as the matter is properly explained, we shall all agree again, except perhaps a Mr. Diderick, one of those whom, as you once wrote, Mr. Howard's

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, l.c., pp. 670-671.



undistinguishing charity admitted into our province and sent hither. He has set all this in motion; and the secret cause tho' perhaps unknown to himself, is that your schoolfellow, Ashton, is very strenuous for the measures adopted; as indeed, are Molyneux, Matthews, Pellentz, Digges, Mosely, Sewall, Boarman, Lewis, etc., and your humble servant. Now Mr. Diderick makes it a point to oppose Mr. Ashton; and I do not believe that I come in for a great share of his good will. I know not whether you are acquainted with this man's history. I am told that he was noted and even confined in the Walloon province for his turbulence. As much as we want recruits, I should not be sorry, he would return to Europe; for I really fear he will do mischief sooner or later. This last part of my letter will be, I hope, to yourself.<sup>22</sup>

The members of the Southern District had issued a district circular against a college and the bishopric. This section of the American Church was strongly conservative in the matter of property rights, and was represented by Father James Walton, who was the legal owner of almost all the Jesuit property. Father Carroll appealed to the members of the clergy to preserve unity of sentiment and of design in the projects which were so necessary for the welfare of the Church in this country. He does not spare Father Diderick, whom he accuses of unfounded prejudices and calumny. A formal reply to the Southern District remonstrance, penned by Fathers Digges, Ashton, Sewall, Boarman, and Carroll, in February, 1787, repeats the Chapter resolutions and states that they were most firmly persuaded that a diocesan bishop was preferable to a vicar-apostolic or a prefect-apostolic as they then had, since both these latter superiors "must necessarily be under the control of a Congregation in Rome, that has always been unfavourable to the Society. And we know from the history of the late Society, that the diocesan bishops throughout Europe were the means of its getting footing, and flourishing in all Catholic countries, and were the most strenuous in the support of its existence in its last period." The bishop for the Church in America, this letter states, would be of their own choosing, and undoubtedly one who had been a member of the Society of Jesus and known to be well affected towards the same. As for his support, the encumbrance on the Jesuit property would not be very great, because his maintenance would hardly exceed what

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, l.c., pp. 672-673.

was being allowed to the prefect-apostolic at that time; and "can there be a shadow of injustice to ourselves to allow a decent maintenance to a successor of the Apostles, a Pastor of Christ's sheep, and a guardian of the depositum of faith?" The writers emphasize one point very well, namely, that it would be much better for the present body of the clergy, all ex-Jesuits, to appeal to the Holy See for a bishop, before the outsiders grew to be a majority and consequently could apply to Propaganda to make one of themselves chief shepherd of the Church here. These newcomers would soon exceed them in numbers, and their petition would be readily granted, and who knows but that Propaganda's appointee might not be "a thorn in our side?" The letter continues with a series of arguments in favour of the proposed bishopric. A diocesan bishop would be glad to put the school under the care of the ex-Jesuits, and if the Society should be reëstablished in the country, "the government of the school will likewise be surrendered into their hands." This was foresight; for, since the restoration of the Society of Jesus in the United States (1806), Georgetown College and University has been the leading Jesuit educational institution in the United States.

Fortunately, the opposition ceased on the receipt of this statesmanlike letter, as Father Carroll tells his friend, Plowden, on March 29, 1787: "I wrote you very fully a few weeks ago. I now have only to add, that, since the sending off of that letter, the gentlemen, who had shown some opposition to the business mentioned in it, have seen the reasonableness of the intended establishment, and of the application to Rome for a Diocesan; and are as urgent as any to have them carried into execution."<sup>23</sup>

Father Carroll's position in the issue of the bishopric is preserved in a letter to Father William O'Brien, then stationed in New York, dated May 10, 1788, from which we have already quoted:

Immediately after receiving your favour of the 30th April, I wrote to Mr. Felicehi [*sic*] and hope that my letter will reach him before his departure. The loss of so amiable an acquaintance must be painful to you. I mentioned to him something concerning our views for an Episcopal government, tho I own that I never enter on this subject

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, l.c., p. 680.

without reluctance and for two reasons. One is that if that government is introduced into our Ecclesiastical policy in America, I have some reason to apprehend that I may be thought of for it, and it is without affectation or pretended show of humility that I declare to you and everywhere else a dread of ever being invested with such an employment. Another reason is that they who know my sincere sentiments may attribute any activity they discover in me for the establishment of Episcopacy to an ambition of having a mitre placed on my head. This is the reason why I have taken so little notice of your many generous and too partial recommendations both of me and to me on that subject. However, I shall now open myself more fully to you. About a year and a half ago, a meeting was held of the clergy of Maryland and of Pennsylvania on their temporal concerns; and conversation devolving on the most effectual means of promoting the welfare of Religion it was agreed on to attempt the establishment of a school and seminary for the general education of Catholic youths and the forming of Ecclesiastics to the ministry of Religion and since the Ecclesiastics would want ordination, the subject of Episcopacy was brought forward and it was determined to solicit it. Two other gentlemen were appointed beside myself to transact this business and they as it happens to easy people like myself, devolved the whole trouble of framing memorials, petitions &c. on me. Being very unwilling to engage in this last affair I delayed till Nugent's misconduct convinced me it was no longer safe to do so, and a prospect having opened itself of procuring a Bishop, eligible by the officiating clergymen in America, instead of being appointed by a foreign tribunal (which would shock the political prejudices of this country) the memorial for that purpose is now gone to his Holiness. This is the business which you may remember I said to you, I should have to communicate but which was afterward put out of mind by the unhappy events which followed.<sup>24</sup>

As will be seen in a subsequent chapter, the Holy See had decided about this time (May, 1788) to proceed with the creation of a bishopric for the United States, and it was admitted on all sides that John Carroll would be the ecclesiastic chosen for that important post.

The work outlined by the Second General Chapter at its initial meeting had met, therefore, with considerable success. Financially, the property of the ex-Jesuits was in danger, not only because of the lack of corporation rights under the State of Maryland, but also because of the possibility of one, not an ex-Jesuit, being appointed bishop. In this case, it was meet that the members of the Select Body of the Clergy should foresee a repetition of those antagonisms and confiscations which had disgraced

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. *Researches*, vol. viii, p. 57.

the Suppression in other lands. A firm step forward educationally had been taken by the school proposals, and it was only a question of time and money before Georgetown College would be founded. In the more delicate matter of jurisdiction, the Chapter succeeded admirably in winning almost unanimous consent from the clergy to the establishment of a bishopric, and with the priests anxious to have the Holy See appoint one of their number to the unique post of proto-bishop of the United States, all further delay on the part of Rome was unnecessary.

One topic, which lay nearest their hearts, and one which can be felt in their deliberations, even at this distance from the Second General Chapter, was the restoration of the Society of Jesus. It would be a callous mind that would not understand the poignancy of their situation. They were a little band of brothers working in a vineyard, much farther away in those days from the great body of the Society in Europe, but they felt every blow dealt at the Society's good name and honour during those years of bitter misunderstanding from 1773 to the restoration in 1814. All these deliberations in district meetings and in Chapters are coloured if not guided by this spirit, and if some of them seem to hold personal views opposed to those of Father Carroll, it is precisely because they were not sure that he had the restoration of the Society at heart. Three years were to pass before the Holy See acted upon the decision of the Chapter, and appointed Father John Carroll, the ex-Jesuit, Bishop of the Church in the United States, and almost twenty years passed before Father Gruber, the General of the Society of Jesus in Russia, acceded to the wish of the Maryland Fathers and allowed them to unite themselves with that portion of the Society in Russia, which by Divine Providence, had escaped the Suppression. The Maryland Fathers never wavered in the desire to have themselves incorporated into the Russian "remnant of the Society," as Carroll called it, "miraculously preserved as it seems, to be the seed of a future generation."

The direct effect of Smyth's and Poterie's vicious attacks upon the ever-thinning band of American ex-Jesuits was to dull Carroll's spirit of hospitality towards the "newcomers" in the Church under his jurisdiction. It was only after his consecration as Bishop of the Diocese of Baltimore, or as Dilhet calls it, the

*Diocèse des États-Unis*, that his fears of not being able to control the accessions of the clerical body left him. How dangerous this element was to the peace and harmony of his diocese is, unfortunately for the honour of the American Catholic priesthood, a chapter in its history which can not be ignored or palliated. But the conclusion must not be drawn that disorder and a state bordering on rebellion existed everywhere in the American Church during these years of an anomalous jurisdiction. The ex-Jesuits were to a man obedient to the prefect in all matters of disciplinary moment, and the mass of the people were living quiet lives in strict accordance with church rule and direction. The schismatics—if indeed, before his consecration, so strong a term may be applied to the few who showed a testimony to rebel—were never of any consequence, socially; and certainly with the prospect of the episcopate, Father Carroll felt better equipped to meet the serious problems of his future diocese.



## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE FIRST AMERICAN STUDENTS IN ROME

(1787-1790)

In his letter to Carroll on June 9, 1784, announcing the latter's appointment as prefect-apostolic of the Church in the new Republic, Cardinal Antonelli offered, as has already been mentioned, two scholarships in the Collegio Urbano to the American Church:

In the meantime, for fear the want of missionaries should deprive the Catholics of spiritual assistance, it has been resolved to invite hither two youths from the States of Maryland and Pennsylvania, to educate them at the expense of the Sacred Congregation in the Urban College; they will afterwards, on returning to their country, be substitutes in the mission. We leave to your solicitude the care of selecting and sending them. You will make choice of those who have more promising talents and a good constitution, who are not less than twelve, nor more than fifteen years of age; who by their proficiency in the sanctuary may give great hopes of themselves. You may address them to the excellent Archbishop of Seleucia, Apostolic Nuncio at Paris, who is informed of their coming. If the young men selected are unable to defray the expenses of the voyage, the Sacred Congregation will provide for them; we even wish to be informed by you frankly and accurately of the necessary travelling expenses to serve as a rule for the future.<sup>1</sup>

The documents from this time up to Carroll's consecration and for some time afterwards have many references to these two American boys. Their journey has many interesting details, and many a dull page in the formal letters that passed between Rome, Paris, and Baltimore is enlivened by their presence in the Eternal City.<sup>2</sup> The Papal Nuncio informed Antonelli on July 5, 1784, that Franklin had told him the cost for the journey across the Atlantic would be probably 70 or 80 *louis d'or*. On July 31, 1784,

<sup>1</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Lettere*, vol. 244, f. 492; translation by SHEA, *History of the Catholic Church in the United States*, vol. ii, pp. 243-245.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, *Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. 2, f. 272.

Antonelli advised the Nuncio to urge Carroll to send the boys at once and ordered him to reimburse the prefect-apostolic for whatever expense they may cause. Doria Pamphili was also to inform Mr. Franklin of this fact.<sup>3</sup> A delay of three years followed Antonelli's generous offer of the two scholarships. Father Carroll had been a teacher in Europe in colleges which were directed by the Society of Jesus, but were under the general control of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide. One source of friction between the secular and regular clergy during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was the oath which every student, especially in the national colleges at Rome, was obliged to take. This Mission Oath, as it was called, bound the student to several things: he promised obedience to the laws of the college; he promised that when he had finished his studies, or if he left the college before the completion of his studies, that for three years he would enter no religious Order or Congregation without the express consent of the Holy See; he promised also that every year, if he was in Europe, or every other year, if outside, he would send to Propaganda a detailed statement of his work, his health, etc.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, while we find Carroll very grateful to Cardinal Antonelli for the scholarships, we find him writing to Father Thorpe on February 17, 1785, as follows: "With respect to sending two youths, I shall inform Propaganda that it would surely be very acceptable to have children educated gratis in so religious a seminary; and very acceptable to us all to have a succession of ministers of the altar provided for, but, as I suppose, they will not receive any into their college, but such as shall afterwards be subject to their government, and it being yet uncertain what effect my representations may produce, I shall delay that measure till further information."<sup>5</sup> In his letter to Antonelli, of February 27, 1785, the prefect-apostolic thus expresses his views:

Regarding the two boys who are to be sent to the Urban College nothing can be done until I understand more fully your Eminence's wishes. If they are unable to bear the expenses of the journey, I understand that

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, *Lettere*, vol. 244, f. 624.

<sup>4</sup> Copies of the Propaganda College Oath will be found in KNOX, *Doway Diaries*, pp. 40, 48, 70. London, 1878.

<sup>5</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9A-F1.

the Sacred Congregation will provide for the same. I have not ascertained to whom it has been entrusted to pay these charges. Captains of ships are not wont to accept passengers, unless the fare be paid in advance, or at least, until they are certain that it will be settled. Moreover, as what I have said regarding the appointment of a bishop or superior, may suggest a possible danger in the manner of administering our ecclesiastical affairs, so also the method of educating boys in the College might be changed. This, however, we do not think will occur. Finally, it would be well, in order that their parents be instructed aright, to know whether any oath will be exacted of their sons, before they return to this country. For, every caution must be used, in order that as far as possible the Catholic priests and laity understand that it is only in necessary spiritual things that a foreign power has control of them. In the meantime, while I am awaiting a reply, I shall see to it that the two boys be selected with the greatest care, such as your letter signifies. I hope also to arrange that their expenses, at least as far as France be paid by their parents; if this is not possible, I shall take care to keep the expenses as low as possible. I understand that the voyage over will cost between 70 and 80 *louis d'or* for each boy.<sup>6</sup>

In his letter to the Nuncio at Paris of this same date, Carroll also mentions the offer of Antonelli and says that the route to Marseilles is less expensive. Dugnani, Doria Pamphili's successor as Nuncio at Paris in 1785, is informed of the scholarships on May 24, 1785, so that he may be on the lookout for the boys' arrival. Carroll's anxiety about the student oath was dispelled in Antonelli's sympathetic letter, of July 23, 1785. The Cardinal-Prefect says:

From the enclosed copy you may understand the form of oath which is taken by our students, and you will see clearly that the most important part of the oath dwells upon this: that each student shall return to his own province with the intention of devoting his labours to the apostolic ministry and that each shall inform the Sacred Congregation concerning his own circumstances. If, however, you discover anything in the oath which could afford displeasure under the present conditions, we will not be averse to accommodating the same form of oath to meet the needs of the students of those regions in whatever way shall seem more desirable, and it shall be your duty to advise us on this in good season.<sup>7</sup>

This letter reached Carroll about a year later—on March 27, 1786, and, as we have said already, it marked a turning point in

<sup>6</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, ff. 306-311.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, *Lettere*, vol. 246, f. 437.

Carroll's attitude towards the Sacred Congregation. The spirit shown by Antonelli was so unmistakably sympathetic that from this time Carroll's letters to Rome, at least while Antonelli lived, show a broader confidence and a surer trust. Carroll replied on August 18, 1786, explaining that the boys had been picked, but that their departure had been hindered by the neglect or inability of their parents to attend to the same.<sup>8</sup> No doubt Carroll had chosen the boys during his Visitation of 1785-86. The delay is somewhat explained in the correspondence; on January 12, 1787, Carroll informed Antonelli that the parents of the first boy selected from Pennsylvania had withdrawn their consent to his going, and another would have to be chosen. This would prolong the journey about two months. Both boys were going to pay their expenses as far as France, so that the Sacred Congregation would be relieved of that part of the burden.<sup>9</sup>

On July 2, 1787, Carroll wrote to Antonelli, announcing the fact that the two boys were then starting out. One was Ralph Smith, 14 years old, of Maryland; the other, Felix Dougherty, 13 years old, of Pennsylvania. They sailed from Philadelphia on a boat bound for Bordeaux, the captain of which was a Catholic. A series of letters from the Papal Nuncio to Propaganda, and from the Archbishop of Bordeaux, as well as from a consul in Civitavecchia, allows us to follow the boys from their arrival in Bordeaux, September 30, 1787, to Marseilles, where they were taken care of by a Mr. Billon, a merchant, who put them on board the boat for Civitavecchia, on December 7, 1787. Through an English interpreter they were made to feel much at home. Their tender age, together with their innocence, and, the agent admits, the dangerous state of the country through which they had to go by stage to Rome, induced him to send them under the care of a faithful steward.

One phrase in Billon's letter would read well in the lives of these boys, had they persevered to the priesthood—"Mi do l'onore di significare all' E. V. che i surriferiti giovani mostrano un'indole amabilissima, una vivezza particolare ed un talente che fa concepire le più lusinghevoli speranze de la lora buona

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 438.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 440.

ruiscità." In his letter to Antonelli of July 28, 1787, Carroll urges that side-by-side with their studies in Rome, the boys be compelled to study English—"cum enim haeretici eleganter dicendi et pronunciandi gloriolam aucupentur." He commended the boys to His Eminence's special care. Another letter in French, from Carroll, dated July 28, 1787, to the Papal Nuncio, announced the departure of the boys. In this we learn that the Bordeaux route was chosen because the captain of the vessel was a Catholic. "Both the boys," Carroll tells the Nuncio, "are bright, especially the latter [Felix Dougherty of Philadelphia]." <sup>10</sup>

The boys arrived at Civitavecchia on January 6, 1788; on the tenth they reached Rome and were given a hearty welcome by the authorities.<sup>11</sup> Carroll had entrusted them with letters to Antonelli, and it is easy to picture the happiness of the Cardinal-Prefect in seeing these first aspirants from the new Republic.<sup>12</sup> For the next ten years, scarcely a letter from Rome to Carroll failed to mention the two boys. Father Thorpe promised to call to see them every week at the Collegio Urbano and to give them news from home.<sup>13</sup> A year later he mentions with particular pleasure the enthusiasm of the boys over the printed Constitution of the United States which Father Carroll had sent to them.<sup>14</sup> When Father Patrick Smyth's diatribe against Carroll and the ex-Jesuits reached Rome, Cardinal Antonelli seems to have lost his head for a moment; for, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, to Thorpe's disgust, he called Ralph and Felix to his room and put them through a long interrogatory on the state of the suppressed Society in the United States.<sup>15</sup>

When the boys finished their humanities and were ready for the Seminary course of studies in Philosophy, they were obliged to

<sup>10</sup> "Ambo ex parentibus nati sunt apprime Catholicis: alter, Rudolphus Smith, ex Marylandia, aetatem habet annos quatuordecim; alter Felix Dogherty, ex Pennsylvania, numerat annes aetatis tredecim [*duodecim*, struck out]. Uterque, sed maxime posterior, dicitur praeclarae indolis et ingenio docili." (*Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. 878, no. 3). Felix Dougherty was baptized at St. Joseph's Church, Philadelphia, in 1774, by Father Robert Molyneux. (Cf. *Records*, vol. iv, pp. 147-148.)

<sup>11</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, ff. 390-394.

<sup>12</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9A-F (rough draft); original in *Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 347.

<sup>13</sup> Father Thorpe to Carroll, Rome, January 6, 1788, in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 8-12.

<sup>14</sup> Same to same, November 1, 1788, *ibid.*, Case 8-17.

<sup>15</sup> Same to same, December 2, 1789, *ibid.*, Case 8-17.



take the Student Oath not to enter any religious Order or Congregation without the express permission of the Holy See, to send a biennial account of their missionary work, with any additional information they desired to Propaganda, to be ordained to the priesthood whenever the Propaganda or College officials should decide, and to remain within the diocese for which they were ordained. The contention caused by this Oath in English Catholic circles during the seventeenth century and later is overshadowed only by the political difficulties caused by the search for a formula of allegiance acceptable to the Crown and to the Catholic conscience. When the time came for Smith and Dougherty to take the Oath, they rebelled. The story is told succinctly in one of Father Thorpe's letters (October 12, 1791):

My letter in beginning of last month promised a further account of your two students. The College Oath was rather suddenly proposed to them only a day or two before the 15th of August, when they and several others about the same age were called to make it. Both of them declined it as all the others did. The common refusal seemed to be concerted, and in this supposition the Cardinal was much disturbed and expressed his disfavour to them with some vehemence that did no good. The prelate who resides in the house and to whom the students have access of appeal showed an indifference; the boys were not to be molested, but quietly sent away, if they were not willing to comply with the intents of the College. The Cardinal called it a bit of extraordinary independence. Then he fixed the 8th of Sept. and declared that whoever did not comply should be immediately dismissed. I had as usual visited your two countrymen, and occasionally spoken in favour of the proposed engagement, as it had been my duty to do so in the English College; as I did not know the extremities to which the Cardinal had pressed the present business until he sent for me, related his grievances, and desired me to confer expressly on the matter with the two Americans, for whom indeed he expressed much concern. Whatever was the cause of disdain in the others, these two had declined the oath on different motives. Felix only objected against the hasty manner in which he had been called to the act that required much consideration; but Raphael strongly excepted against the promise of taking Holy Orders at the will of another; on these and similar difficulties he remained obstinate for some time until he had perceived them not to be what he had apprehended. Thus their own good sense and piety reconciled the minds of both. They cheerfully made the desired oblation of themselves on the appointed day. Their example was salutary to their fellow students and they continue to give entire satisfaction to the College. They are both well and desire your blessing.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Same to same, *ibid.*, Case 8-K8. Cf. *Acta Apostolicas Sedis, Commentarium*

We catch occasional glimpses of the boys in the correspondence of the period. Father Thorpe found them both in tears one day in June, 1791, and Felix confessed that they were losing heart and had become homesick. The seven long years ahead before ordination seemed "an eternity." Another important episode of their days in Rome came in 1796, when Felix Dougherty preached in Latin on Pentecost Sunday, in the historic Sistine Chapel, before Pope Pius VI. Among the many valuable documents in the Archives of the Dominican Order at Washington, D. C., is a manuscript copy of the sermon, on sixteen half-pages of small-sized legal paper, each page being four lines in length. Besides the title: *A Sermon on the Coming of the Holy Ghost*, the manuscript bears two Imprimaturs—one by the Most Rev. Francis Xavier Passari, then Acting-Prefect of Propaganda, the other by the Rev. Vincent Pani, O.P., Master of the Sacred Palace. The order of the sermon is very logical, but the Latin is mediocre in style.

The following year (1797) both the young men gave up their studies and came back to America. Letters in the Propaganda Archives for the year 1797, show that Smith decided he had no vocation and that Dougherty returned on account of ill-health (*per ragione della mia debole salute*).<sup>17</sup> Propaganda announced the departure of the boys in a letter to Bishop Carroll, dated September, 1797.<sup>18</sup> They returned by way of Leghorn, Marseilles, Paris, and Lisbon, to Baltimore.

Ralph Smith apparently is lost to sight after his return. There are letters of 1803 from a gentleman of that name from New

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*Officiale*, annus i, vol. i, p. 687. Rome, 1909. The Oath imposed upon the students of all Pontifical Colleges at this time was that drawn up in the pontificate of Alexander VII, under date of July 20, 1660. It varies somewhat from the Oath prescribed by Pope Urban VIII (November 24, 1625).

<sup>17</sup> The letters regarding their return (March 27, 1797-September, 1797) are in the *Propaganda Archives, Lettere*, vol. 274, f. 106; vol. 275, ff. 143-144.

<sup>18</sup> "Binos Americanos tuae jurisdictioni subjectos ad Amplitudinem tuam mittimus Dominum Raphaellem Smith aetate proveciorem et Dominum Felicem Dougherty juniorem. Eorundem iter maturare coacti fuimus, quod nempe primus in sortem Domini adhuc se vocatum non esse sentiat, atque ad natale solum redeundi desiderio tenebatur; alter vero ob suam valetudinem minus firmam iudicio medicorum quantocius patrium aerem respirare compellebatur, ut ad pristinam sanitatem redire valeat itaque tuae erit prudentiae Raphaelis vocationem alio quoque tempore experiri, ac perpendere, an felicitis valetudo patiatur, ut sacris initiari valeat, eidem constans ac firma vocatio est, sui que ingenii, studiorumque suorum optima specimina praeibuit." (*Propaganda Archives, Lettere*, vol. 275, f. 106.)

Orleans to Bishop Carroll in the Baltimore Cathedral Archives, stating that he is about to pass his medical examination in that city, but it is impossible to say whether it is the same person. Smith's oath to report to Propaganda was binding upon him, even after his return, but no letters were found in the Archives at Rome. Of Felix Dougherty we have the further information that he entered St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, in 1798, but "soon" withdrew. On October 16, 1798, he wrote as follows to Cardinal Gerdil, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation:

As an Alumnus of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide, and having, by virtue of the Oath taken in the Urban College, obligated myself to write every two years to the Worthy Congregation, I intend by this letter to satisfy this obligation since a favorable opportunity presents itself to do so.

I beg to recall to Your Eminence that I left the College last year on account of my weak state of health. I am at present in the Seminary of my Bishop at Baltimore, but I am preparing myself to leave within a short time in order to go to the Catholic College at Georgetown to teach the Classics to the Catholic youth there. My ordination is thereby deferred for one or two years. The dispersion of their Eminences who compose the Sacred Congregation and the lamentable catastrophe which has fallen upon Rome this year induces me to ask for a dispensation from the Oath which I took to Your Eminence while at College particularly that part of it which obliges me to write as stated above to the Sacred Congregation. I ask this from Your Eminence because you, as Prefect of the Congregation, have the power of granting it to me in the name of His Holiness. I do not ask it because I wish to join any religious Order nor because I do not intend to receive Sacred Orders at the proper time and to work in the Vineyard of the Lord; but because I regard the Oath as a great burden on my conscience in favor of the Holy Congregation without it being useful or even necessary to me in my present state.

If Your Eminence deigns to reply to me, as I beg you to do, may I ask you to direct your letter either to the Bishop for me or personally to myself at the Baltimore Seminary. I shall say nothing of my own great sorrow and of that of all the Catholics by all that has happened at Rome; we do not cease our prayers to God for His powerful protection over the Church which is the work of His hands. I will say only that our Holy Religion flourishes here and is becoming extended beyond all belief. At my return I found the number of Catholics almost doubled. It is a calamity for us, however, that the Bulls for the Consecration of the Co-adjutor to the Bishop, which had been sent twice from Rome during my time there, have not yet arrived. Hence, His consecration is perforce postponed.

My Lord Cardinal, with the most profound reverence and respect, I

kiss the Sacred Purple, and beg to be Your Eminence's most humble, devoted and grateful servant and subject.

At the end of this letter, in the handwriting of Cardinal Gerdil, is the annotation: "Reply that his obligation to write every two years be fulfilled at his convenience; that he is not dispensed from his promise to proceed to ordination, and that he should reflect that now more than ever the Sacred Congregation has need of labourers in the vineyard. A third copy of the Bulls in question to be sent at once."

In the Archives of the Collegio Urbano there is a reference to Dougherty to the effect that he had left St. Mary's Seminary in order to take up a teaching post at Georgetown College. Diligent inquiry has failed to show that the names of these first two American students at Rome are in any of the extant Clergy Lists.<sup>19</sup> After the failure of the American scholarships in Rome, Bishop Carroll sent no more students abroad. His hopes were henceforth centred on St. Mary's Seminary.

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<sup>19</sup> It is possible that Felix Dougherty is the person referred to by Finotti (*Bibl. Cath. Americana*, p. 75). Finotti's copy of Carroll's *Discourse on General Washington*, contained an autograph letter from the Bishop to Felix Dougherty, Esq., at his office, East Street, Baltimore.

## CHAPTER XIX

### CARROLL'S ELECTION TO THE SEE OF BALTIMORE

(1786-1789)

The first period of the problem of episcopal jurisdiction in the United States ends with Carroll's appointment as prefect-Apostolic on June 9, 1784. One point in Antonelli's letter of that date needs repetition, however, since the Clergy Petition of May 18, 1789, asking the Holy See for the privilege of electing one of their own body to the post of proto-bishop of the new Republic, may be traced to that document. The prefectship, the Cardinal wrote, was meant to be a temporary arrangement, and Father Carroll was made aware of this plan on August 20, 1784, through Father Thorpe's letter of June 9th of that year. When this letter was laid before the priests of the First General Chapter of the American Clergy, at Whitmarsh, on October 11, 1784, a resolution was passed to the effect that a bishop was unnecessary at the time. A Committee of Three was appointed so to inform the Holy See. The *Memorial* of December, 1784, embodies the spirit of that resolution. The American clergy opposition was discussed by Carroll in his letter to Thorpe, of February 17, 1785, and the reason given is already a familiar one to the reader: "It will never be suffered that their [the Catholic] Ecclesiastical superior (be he a bishop or prefect-apostolic) receive his appointment from a foreign State, and only hold it at the discretion of a foreign tribunal or congregation." Carroll echoed the common belief that it would be fatal to the Catholic Church in the Republic, if acknowledgment of dependence on the Holy See should be interpreted by the civil authorities as submission to a foreign power. He realized how delicately the American sentiment should be translated into the language of Rome, and how invidious his statement might seem to those who should be inclined to see behind the stand the American priests were taking "a re-



maining spirit of Jesuitism," that is, a spirit of resentment against the sacrifice demanded in 1773. He was decided that a plain and honest representation of the situation was necessary, and he was determined to run the risk of misunderstanding at Rome, rather than allow the permanent interests of Religion to suffer. This sentiment he explained clearly and deferentially to the Cardinal-Prefect of Propaganda in his celebrated *Letter* of February 27, 1785—his letter of acceptance of the prefectship.

Cardinal Antonelli had indicated the intention of the Holy See to establish a vicariate for the United States, and while the solicitude of Rome for the American Church filled the hearts of its leaders with joy, nevertheless, Dr. Carroll believed it his duty to inform Propaganda that the American Anglicans had decided in their last convention to obtain a bishop for their Church. This decision, Carroll says, was not censured by the Congress, then in session for the purpose of drafting a Constitution. Since the Catholics enjoyed the same liberty in the exercise of their religion, it necessarily followed that they enjoyed the same right in regard to adopting measures for their own organization. Dr. Carroll then expressed the belief that the time was opportune for the appointment of a bishop over the American Catholics. There would be no danger of arousing any opposition from non-Catholic sources. He realized, however, that since the Holy See had granted him the faculty of conferring the Sacrament of Confirmation, the necessity for a superior invested with episcopal dignity and character was not so pressing. There was little doubt in Carroll's mind that the appointment of a bishop, rather than a vicar-apostolic subject to Propaganda, would conduce more to the progress of the Church in this country, and would contribute much to remove Protestant jealousy of a foreign jurisdiction. "I know with certainty," he writes, "that this fear will increase, if they know that an ecclesiastical superior is so appointed as to be removable from office at the pleasure of the Sacred Congregation, or any other tribunal out of the country, or that he has no power to admit any priest to exercise the sacred ministry, unless appointed and sent by the Congregation of Propaganda Fide." Carroll added that the priests here were imploring God in His wisdom and mercy to guide the judgment of the Holy See, lest anything should be decided upon which would be detri-

mental to the American spirit. For that reason he stated it would be best to allow the American clergy to elect their own episcopal superior, so that "bad feeling may not be excited among the people of this country."<sup>1</sup>

Carroll's Visitation of 1785-86 proved the necessity of a stronger bond of union with the spiritual power of Rome. The "stirs" in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, were potent with uneasiness for the struggling Church in the United States; and the priests who had met at Whitemarsh in 1783 to reconstruct the shattered forces of the Faith were the first to realize that a presbyterian or archipresbyterate form of church government was too weak to control the divergent outlook already discernible in the principal cities.

It must be admitted that, in spite of the brusque action of Propaganda or, rather, of some of its officials in the Suppression of the Society of Jesus ten years before, no impartial reader of his letters can consider Cardinal Antonelli as otherwise than sympathetic towards the Church in the United States. His part in the French intrigue can be excused from the standpoint of zeal, although on its face the whole affair bears the mark of the ecclesiastical politician. When he received Carroll's manly letter of February 27, 1785, he lost no time in reassuring the anxious Superior of the American Mission that it was the intention of Propaganda to satisfy in every way not only the wishes of the clergy in the United States, but also the sentiments of independence then so intensely on the alert in the new nation. His answer of July 23, 1785, states this quite clearly: "The Sacred Congregation has also determined to establish a vicar-apostolic with the title and character of bishop in the thirteen provinces of United America and to confer this dignity first upon Your Lordship. If, however, you judge it to be more expedient and more consistent with the Constitution of the Republic that the missionaries themselves, at least for the first time, recommend some one to the Sacred Congregation to be promoted to the office of vicar-apostolic, the Sacred Congregation will not hesitate to perform whatever you consider to be most expedient."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9A-F (original draft); original copy in the *Propaganda Archives*, *Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, ff. 308-309.

<sup>2</sup> *Propaganda Archives*, *Lettere*, vol. 246, f. 437.

This letter, which we consider the most important document of the five years of Carroll's superiorship, reached Carroll on March 27, 1786, and when it was presented to the deputies of the clergy at the Second General Chapter, held at Whitemarsh in November, 1786, it was quickly acted upon; and, as we have seen in a previous section, the opposition was soon satisfied and the way was cleared for the further action of Rome. Marbois had written from New York on March 27, 1785, to the Sacred Congregation that the Holy See could do nothing so advantageous to the Church in the United States than the appointment of Carroll, and he urged his promotion to episcopal honours. The Anglicans, Marbois explained, had already prepared the Americans for the presence of bishops, even though these would be obliged to go to England for consecration. The busy Frenchman suggested that the Holy See might name a vicar-apostolic, who would later be promoted to the episcopate; or, the churches of the thirteen States might elect a subject—this latter method he believed to be more in keeping with the spirit of the American people—"quest' ultima forma sarebbe senza dubbio più analogo allo spirito di questi popoli," the Italian document runs. But the Catholics were so scattered that he did not see how such an election could take place. This is the reason why Marbois urged the promotion of Carroll, since all were then accustomed to regard him as the head of the Church in the United States, and no one would wonder at his elevation to the episcopate.<sup>3</sup>

When the opposition to the creation of a bishop for the new Republic ceased, the Committee of Three, Fathers Carroll, Molyneux and Ashton, drafted its *Memorial* to the Holy See. Whether Molyneux or Ashton had a hand in its composition, is problematical. Carroll wrote to Father William O'Brien, then at New York, on May 10, 1788, saying that the whole trouble of framing materials, petitions, etc., had devolved on himself. Carroll saw the necessity of making progress on account of the unrest in New York and Philadelphia, and on March 12, 1788, the following *Memorial*, which can be styled the Clergy Petition for a Bishop, was sent to Pope Pius VI:

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<sup>3</sup> Collection of papers, entitled: *Sobre la errecion de un Obispado*, in the *Archivo General de Indias* (Seville), leg. 3895, an. 1788. Italian copies are in the *Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, etc.*, vol. ii, f. 316.

*Most Holy Father:*

We, the undersigned, petitioners approaching the Apostolic See, with all due veneration, and prostrate at the feet of your Holiness, humbly set forth the following: That we are priests who have been specially deputed by our fellow-priests exercising with us the religious ministry in the United States of America, in order that we may, in the first place, return unbounded thanks to your Holiness for the truly paternal care, which you have deigned to extend to this remote part of the Lord's vineyard: and in the next place, to manifest that we all, had been stimulated by this great care, to continue and increase our labors to preserve and extend the faith of Christ our Lord, in these States, which are filled with the errors of all the sects. In doing so, we are convinced, that we not only render meet service to God, but also render a pleasing and acceptable homage to the common Father of the faithful. Moreover to correspond to this great solicitude, we believe it our duty to expose to your Holiness, whatever from our long experience in these States, seems necessary to be known, in order that your pastoral providence may be most usefully administered in our regard.

Therefore, inasmuch as his Eminence Cardinal Antonelli intimated to one of your petitioners, in a letter dated July 23, 1785, that it was the design of the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide to appoint a Bishop Vicar-Apostolic, for these States as soon as possible, whenever the said Sacred Congregation understood that this would be seasonable, and desired to be informed as to the suitable time for that appointment, by the priest to whom the said letter was addressed, we declare, not he only but we in the common name of all the priests labouring here, Most Holy Father, that in our opinion the time has now come when the Episcopal dignity and authority are very greatly to be desired. To omit other very grave reasons, we experience more and more in the constitution of this very free republic, that if there are even among the ministers of the sanctuary, any men of indocile mind, and chafing under ecclesiastical discipline, they allege as an excuse for their license and disobedience, that they are bound to obey bishops exercising their own authority and not a mere priest exercising any vicarious jurisdiction. This was the boast of the men who recently at New York sought to throw off the yoke of authority, and alleged this pretext, which seemed most likely to catch the favour of Protestants, in that more than in any other State, contending forsooth that the authority of the ecclesiastical superior whom the Sacred Congregation has appointed for us, was forbidden by law, because it not only emanates from a foreign tribunal, but is also dependent on it for its duration and exercise. We refrain from setting out all this more at length to your Holiness, inasmuch as we have learned that certain original documents have been transmitted to Rome, from which it can be more clearly seen, with what powers the person should be invested, to whom the ecclesiastical government of these States is confided.

With this view, we represent to the Supreme Pastor of the faithful on earth, that all the grounds on which the authority of the Superior as



now constituted may be rendered odious, will have equal weight against a bishop, to whom the powers of a vicar, and not of an ordinary, are granted.

Therefore, Most Holy Father, we express in the name and by the wish of all, our opinion that the political and religious condition of these States requires that form of ecclesiastical government by which provision may be most efficaciously made in the first place for the integrity of faith and morals, and consequently for perpetual union with the Apostolic See, and due respect and obedience toward the same, and in the next place, that if any bishop is assigned to us, his appointment and authority may be rendered as free as possible from suspicion and odium to those among whom we live. Two points, it seems to us, will contribute greatly to this end; first, that the Most Holy Father, by his authority in the Church of Christ, erect a new episcopal see in these United States, immediately subject to the Holy See; in the next place, that the election of the bishop, at least for the first time, be permitted to the priests, who now duly exercise the religious ministry here and have the cure of souls. This being established, your most vigilant wisdom, Most Holy Father, after hearing the opinions of our priests of approved life and experience, and considering the character of our government, will adopt some course, by which future elections may be permanently conducted.

These are, Most Holy Father, what we have deemed it proper to submit with the utmost devotion of our hearts to your Holiness's pastoral care, declaring, as though we were about to give an account of our sentiments to Jesus Christ, the divine bishop of souls, that we have nothing in view, except the increase of our holy Faith, growth of piety, vigour of ecclesiastical discipline, and the complete refutation of false opinions in regard to the Catholic religion, which have imbued the minds of Protestants.

May Almighty God long preserve you, Most Holy Father, to Christian people, that you not only benignly foster this American church, as you have already done, but also guard it with all spiritual protection, and establish it thoroughly, and finally that you will vouchsafe to bestow on us prostrate at your feet your Apostolical and fatherly blessing.

This is the prayer of

*Your Holiness's*

*Most devoted and obedient Servants and Sons,*

JOHN CARROLL

ROBERT MOLYNEUX

JOHN ASHTON <sup>4</sup>

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\* *Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, ff. 358ss. There is a copy of this Clergy Petition in Carroll's hand in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9-T6. The translation given is taken from SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 326-329. The original is as follows: "*Beatissime Pater, Nos infrascripti oratores ad Sedem Apostolicam omni debita veneratione accendentes, et ad Sanctitatis Vestrae pedes provoluti ea quae sequuntur, humiliter exponimus; nos scilicet sacerdotes speciali-*



The chief points of the *Memorial* are: the necessity of a bishop, appointed directly by the Holy See, and immediately subject to the Holy See; freedom of election for this first time to be granted to the American clergy; a method to be adopted for future elections in keeping with the character of the American Constitution. A few days later, on March 18, 1788, Carroll wrote to Antonelli, describing in detail the scandalous contumacy of Father Nugent in New York City and urging the immediate appointment of a bishop. The American clergy, he said, believe that the time has come for designating someone with episcopal authority and jurisdiction. He was embarrassed at urging this procedure upon the Holy See, because it might have the appearance of ambition on his own part. "But I would rather run the risk of this suspicion than by keeping silence hide the danger that is imminent in religious circles here." This letter was not sent until April 19, 1788, when Carroll added a postscript on the progress made in the matter of church incorporation under the laws of Maryland. He told Antonelli that when he was in New

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ter deputatos fuisse a fratribus nostris sacerdotibus religionis ministeria nobiscum exercentibus, in Foederatae Americae provinciis, ut imprimis Sanctitati Suae ingentes gratias referamus pro sollicitudine plane paterna, quam in dissitam hanc dominicae vineae portionem extendere dignetur; ac deinde significamus nos omnes hac tanta sollicitudine excitatos fuisse ad labores nostros continuandos, augendosque pro conservanda et amplianda Christi Domini fide in his provinciis quae omnium sectarum erroribus replentur; ita nempe faciendo persuasum habemus, nos non solum debitum Deo obsequium exhibere, sed etiam communi Patri fidelium gratum acceptumque reddere officium. Praeterea ut tantae sollicitudini respondeamus, muneris nostri esse credimus illa omnia Sanctitati Suae patefacere, quae pro diuturna nostra in his provinciis experientia scitu necessaria videntur, ut pastoralis tua in nos providentia, quam fieri potest, utilissime administretur. Itaque cum Emin. Cardinalis Antonelli uni oratorum significaverit litteris datis die 23 Julii 1785 Sanctae Congregationis de Propaganda fide mentem fuisse pro hisce provinciis constituere episcopum vicarium apostolicum quamprimum eadem Sacra Congregatio illud opportunum fore intelligeret, cuperetque de congruo ad eam designationem tempore, certior fieri ab eo, ad quem scripsit Emin. Cardinalis, inde est, Beatissime Pater, ut non ille tantum sed omnes communi omnium operatorum nomine profiteamur nostra quidem opinione tempus iam advenisse, quo dignitas et auctoritas episcopalis maxime desideratur. Ut enim alias gravissimas rationes omitamus, magis ac magis experimur in hac liberrima reipublicae constitutione, si quae sint vel inter ipsos sanctuarii iministros indocilis ingenii homines vel disciplinae ecclesiasticae impatientes, eos suae licentiae et disobedientiae excusationem praetendere quod episcopis quidem propria auctoritate utentibus obedire teneantur, non autem simplici sacerdote vicariam quamdam ac legibus nostris interdictam jurisdictionem exercenti. Hoc nuper Neo-Eboraci jactitarunt, qui auctoritatis jugum cupiunt excutere, et eum praecaeteris pervicaciae suae praeteritum quaesiverunt, qui esset ad capessendum heterodoxorum favorem maxime idoneus; contendere siquidem auctoritatem superioris ecclesiastici, quem nobis Sacra Congregatio constituit, esse illegitimam, utpote a tribunali externo profectam, ab eodemque dependentem quoad durationem et exercitium. Haec Sanctitati Tuae fusius exponere supersedemus quod documenta quaedam originalia

York last autumn, he had several long talks with the Spanish Consul de Gardoqui, and that the latter saw no hope for the Church in America unless a bishop were immediately appointed to guide it through the difficulties which were multiplying on all sides.<sup>5</sup> Carroll's letter to Gardoqui, of April 19, 1788, in which we learn that the *Memorial* was dispatched with the official mail of the Spanish Consul, was as follows:

Your Excellency will be pleased to recollect a conversation with which I was honoured during my residence in New York. It related to the expediency, and indeed the necessity, of introducing episcopal government into the United States, as no other would carry sufficient weight to restrain the turbulent clergymen whom views of independence would probably conduct into this country. This opinion appeared to be strongly impressed on your Excellency, and is the natural result of your thorough penetration into the nature and necessary effects of our republican governments. You noticed at the same time their great opposition to foreign

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Romam transmissa esse cognovimus, ex quibus intelligetur, qua auctoritate ipsum muniri conveniat, cui ecclesiasticum harum provinciarum regimem committitur.

Ad haec Supremo in terra Fidelium Pastori exponimus illa omnia, ex quibus invisae reddi potest auctoritas superioris prout nunc constituitur, militatura etiam contra episcopum cui vicaria solummodo et non ordinaria potestas concederetur. Igitur, Beatissime Pater, communi voto ac nomine significamus, nobis videri statum politicum et religiosum harum provinciarum exigere ejusmodi formam regiminis ecclesiastici, per quem imprimis efficaciter provideatur fidei, morumque integritati, adeoque unioni perpetuae cum Sede Apostolica, debitisque erga Illam observantiae et obsequii, deinde ut episcopi, si quis nobis concedendus est, designatio et auctoritas reddatur quam maxime suspecta aut odiosa illos quos inter vivimus. Ad quem finem, duo videntur nobis multum collatura; primum, ut Beatissimus Pater pro sua in Christi ecclesiae auctoritate, novam sedem episcopalem erigat in his Foederatae Americae provinciis Sedi Apostolicae immediate suffraganeam, deinde ut episcopi electio, saltem prima vice, permittatur presbyteris, qui nunc religionis ministeria hic debite exercent, curamque agunt animarum. Illo autem constituto, et redacta in Formam Americana Ecclesia, curabit provida Sedis Apostolicae sollicitudo, ut ratio aliqua stabilis concludatur, secundum quam in posterum episcopi designentur. Haec sunt, Beatissime Pater, quae maxima animi devotione Sanctitati Tuae pastorali sollicitudine submittenda esse existimavimus, ex animo profidentes et tanquam reddituri rationem nostri consilii divino animarum episcopo Jesu Christo, nihil nos prae oculis habere quam ut sancta nostra fides augeatur, crescat pietas, vigeat disciplina ecclesiastica, atque falsae opiniones, quae heterodoxorum animis de vera religione insederunt, omnino evellantur. Deus Optimus Maximus christiano populo Te, Beatissime Pater, diu servet incolumem, ut hanc Ecclesiam Americanam non solum benigne foveas, ut fecisti, sed etiam omni spirituali subsidio custodias, penitusque constituas, utque nobis ad pedes tuos procumbentibus apostolicam ac paternam benedictionem velis elargiri.

Ita precantur

*Sanctitatis Tuae devotissimi et obedientissimi servi et filii:* Joannes Carroll, Robertus Molyneux, Joannes Ashton, *presbyteri.* Baltimore in provincia Marilandiae Martii die 12, 1788." (tergo) Sanctissimo Domino Nostro Pio VI Papae.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid., Scritture riferite, etc.*, vol. 2, f. 363. Part of this letter is cited by HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, p. 637.

jurisdiction, and the prejudices which would certainly arise against our religion if the appointment of the bishop were to rest in a distant congregation of Cardinals; and if he were to act as their vicar removable at their pleasure; for which reasons you thought that the bishop should be chosen by the American clergy, approved by the Holy See for the preservation of unity in faith, and ordained to some title or see to be erected within these States, with the ordinary powers annexed to the episcopal character. You even were so obliging as to offer to support with your recommendation a petition addressed to His Holiness for this purpose, and to transmit it to the Count of Floridablanca, with a request to his Excellency to have it presented with the great additional interest of his recommendation. In consequence of this generous offer, your Excellency will receive from one of my Brethren, at Philadelphia, the Rev. Mr. Beeston, the original petition to be sent to his Holiness, and which, I doubt not, you will be so kind as to forward in the manner you were pleased to mention. I am so much concerned to preserve the favourable regard, with which you have hitherto honoured me, that I must request you not to impute the petition to views of ambition. Such a passion will be poorly gratified by such a bishopric as ours will be: labour and solicitude it will yield in plenty, and I trust these heavy burdens will never fall on my shoulders.<sup>a</sup>

Gardoqui transmitted a copy of the *Memorial* on July 25, 1788, to the Prime Minister, Floridablanca, and accompanied it with a letter of his own urging the appointment of Carroll. From Madrid, the letter and *Memorial* were sent on September 23, 1788, to the Spanish Ambassador at the Court of Pius VI, Don Nicholas de Azara, who presented them to Cardinal Antonelli on November 19, 1788. Meanwhile, the Sacred Congregation had acted upon the Clergy Petition. At a general congregation of Propaganda, held on June 23, 1788, the *Memorial* was favourably acted upon. The *Atti* of that date state that:

In order to check certain refractory ecclesiastics who boast that they are not bound to obey a simple vicar, exercising only an uncertain jurisdiction which is forbidden by the laws of that Republic, and in order to provide for a more stable way for order and the propagation of the Catholic religion in those states, it was absolutely necessary that His Holiness would design to erect a diocese immediately dependent upon the Holy See, and that to make the selection, as well as the authority, of the new prelate less suspicious, it seemed to be very desirable that His Holiness would grant that, *on this first occasion at least*, the bishop be

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<sup>a</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9A-G1.

nominated by that part of the clergy which at present has the care of souls in the said provinces.<sup>7</sup>

This was granted by Pius VI in an audience on July 6, 1788, and on July 12, 1788, Cardinal Antonelli wrote to the three memorialists announcing the favourable result of their Petition:

Inasmuch as all the labourers in this vineyard of the Lord agree in this, that the appointment of one bishop seems absolutely necessary to retain priests in duty and to propagate more widely piety and religion—a bishop who can preside over the flock of Catholics scattered through these States of Confederate America, and rule and govern them with the authority of an Ordinary, Our Most Holy Lord Pope Pius VI with the advice of this holy Congregation, has most benignly decided that a favourable consent should be given to their vows and petitions. By you therefore, it is first to be examined in what city this episcopal see ought to be erected, and whether the title of the bishopric is to be taken from the place of the see, or whether a titular bishop only should be established. This having been done, his Holiness as a special favour and for this first time, permits the priests who at the present time duly exercise the ministry of the Catholic religion and have care of souls to elect as bishop a person eminent in piety, prudence, and zeal for the faith, from the said clergy, and present him to the Apostolic See to obtain confirmation. And the Sacred Congregation does not doubt but that you will discharge this matter with becoming circumspection, and it hopes that this whole flock will derive not only great benefit but also great consolation from this episcopate. It will be then for you to decide both the proper designation of a See and the election of a bishop, that the matter may be further proceeded with.<sup>8</sup>

When this letter reached the United States, the Committee of Three, Carroll, Molyneux, and Ashton, sent out a circular letter dated March 25, 1789, stating that the way was cleared for the election of their bishop. Hughes tells us that the Committee named three local committees for the three districts, whose duty it was to collect the suffrages of the priests, and to report to them before the end of April.<sup>9</sup> Shea states that on the receipt of Antonelli's letter a meeting of the clergy was held at White-marsh and after the celebration of Mass, the votes of those present were taken. "An authentic act of this assembly was then drawn

<sup>7</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Atti* (1789) ff. 369-378; cf. *Fish-Devitt Transcripts*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, *Lettere*, vol. 205, ff. 595ss:

<sup>9</sup> *L.c.*, p. 685.



up, signed, and forwarded to the Sacred Congregation de P. F.”<sup>10</sup> Shea is correct, for we read in *the Atti* of 1789:

The deputies humbly offering thanks to the Holy Father and to this Holy Congregation for the grace kindly accorded to them, to the consolation and spiritual advantage of that Catholic flock, write under date of May 18 (1788) that the general sentiment has shown itself to be that a bishop with ordinary jurisdiction would be much more suitable for the purposes of the spiritual government than a titular bishop, and that he would be, also, more acceptable and less suspicious to the States; and on the other hand, that Baltimore had been unanimously selected as the place for an episcopal see, that being a centre in the centre of Maryland, where the greater part of the faithful and of the clergy are to be found, and whence the faith has been happily disseminated through the other provinces. And finally, they say that, after the celebration of the Mass of the Holy Ghost, the assistance of the Father of lights having been implored, the votes of those present, as well as those that were sent from a distance, were counted, with the result that the Very Reverend John Carroll, the present Superior of those missions, was duly elected bishop, having received twenty-four votes, while two other candidates, Ignatius Matthews and Henry Pile, received two votes, adding that three of the electors were either unwilling, or neglected, to send in their suffrages.<sup>11</sup>

Pope Pius VI confirmed the choice of the American clergy, and at a general congregation of Propaganda Fide, held on September 14, 1789, the cardinals concurred in Carroll's election. A formal decree was then drawn up to this effect, and made known to the Pope. On the 17th, Pius VI ordered the Apostolic Brief or Bull to be prepared. At the same time, the Sacred Congregation wrote to Fathers Molyneux, Ashton, Sewall and “the other priests having the care of souls in the United States,” announcing Rome's acceptance of the election:

Nothing more acceptable and pleasing could happen to us, than all ambition being laid aside, and without being influenced by party spirit, you should have nominated, by almost unanimous consent, John Carroll as the first Bishop of the new See of Baltimore. For, since our Holy Father Pius VI was fully aware of the unblemished reputation of Mr. Carroll and of the remarkable zeal with which for many years he has strenuously laboured there for the salvation of souls, His Holiness has confirmed by Apostolic Decree the liberty of this first election granted to

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 334.

<sup>11</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Atti* (1789), f. 378.



you by special favour, and which you have exercised with such rectitude and wisdom. Therefore, after the new Prelate shall have been duly consecrated, nothing more remains than that you vie with one another in stretching forth your helping hands for the cultivation of that most flourishing vineyard, and that being admitted to a share of the pastoral solicitude you should labor with united forces for care of that flock. By this means you will bring to a happy conclusion the work so splendidly begun, and in the mystical body which has now received a head, will be verified that which was worthy of admiration in the first followers of Christ,—one heart and one mind. As we are certain that this will be the case, in order that you may fulfil it exactly, we, in union with you, implore Almighty God that the choice of your Bishop may correspond with your desires and our hopes.<sup>12</sup>

Meanwhile, the third General Chapter of the American Clergy had convened at Whitemarsh, May 11-18, 1789. Taking advantage of Rome's acceptance of their mode of election, the Chapter attempted to stabilize a permanent mode of appointing bishops in the future. Their resolutions were:

1. That the clergymen of the United States, living within a convenient distance from the residence of the bishop, and who have been approved for the administration of the Sacraments during three years preceding immediately, ought to concur in the election of the bishop.
2. That at present none but the Clergy residing in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the City of New York, are within a convenient distance for this purpose.
3. That the clergymen, as above described, shall be parcelled into divisions consisting of six members, each of which shall choose two

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<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, *Lettere*, vol. 255, ff. 599ss: "*R. D. Roberto Molineux Joanni Ashton Carolo Sewall aliisque praesbyteris in Foederatis Americae Provinciis curam animarum gerentibus.*"

"Nihil profecto gratius, atque jucundius nobis accidere poterat, quam quod omni ambitione posthabita, nullo suo partium aestu abrepti unanimi pene consensu Joannem Carroll primum episcopum novae istius Baltimorensis Ecclesiae designastis. Quum enim Sanctissimus Dominus Noster Pius VI perpetuam plene haberet eiusdem viri probitatem, ac studium singulare, quo isthic diu multumque animarum saluti incubuit, vobis ex speciali gratia, primae huius electionis libertatem, qua tam recte sapienterque usi estis, vestramque electionem ratam habens, literis apostolicis confirmavit. Post quam igitur novus Antistes rite consecratus fuerit, nihil aliud restat quam ut vos eidem manus auxiliares certatim porrigatis ad florentissimam istiusmodi vineam excolendam, et in partem pastoralis sollicitudinis admissi, ad istius gregis custodiam collatis viribus satagatis. Sic enim opus a vobis egregie inceptum felicitate absolvetis, et in mystico corpore cui modo caput impositum est, fiet, quod in primis Christi cultoribus mirari licuit, cor unum et anima una. Quod quidem quum certum habeamus, fore ut vos exacte praesteritis nos quoque vobiscum Deum Optimum Maximum deprecabimur, ut vestri episcopi electio justissimis optatis vestris, nostrisque votis respondeat." Translation as given by SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 333-334.

electors of a bishop; and the divisions shall be made by the rectors of Port Tobacco, Baltimore, and St. Mary's Church of Philadelphia.

4. That, whenever a proper requisition is made, or a vacancy happens by death, the electors shall convene at the usual place of residence of the bishop, unless some other place be agreed on, within one month after requisition, or notification of the bishop's death; and, having made public profession of their faith as contained in the Creed of Pius the Fourth, shall proceed to give their votes signed with their own hands for some clergyman within the diocese; and whoever has two-thirds of the votes of all the electors present, shall be the person duly chosen. But if, after two scrutinies, no one has two-thirds of all the votes, then the election shall be determined by a majority of the votes of all the electors present.

5. That, if ever it should be thought proper to appoint a coadjutor, the ordinary shall convene the electors, and may recommend to them the person he judges most proper. The electors shall then proceed to the election in the manner above directed; but the bishop shall have a vote with them; and, if it so happen that the election is to be determined by a majority of votes, the bishop shall have a casting vote, in case of an equal division.

6. That this plan, if approved by a majority of the clergymen, who as above mentioned ought to concur in the election of a bishop, be powerfully recommended at Rome, to be confirmed by the authority of the H. See.

Ordered, that the above be communicated to all the clergymen in the three Districts, and that their sentiments thereon be collected by the Rev. Mr. Molyneux in the Northern District, by the Rev. Mr. Charles Sewall in the Middle District, and by the Rev. Mr. Ignatius Matthews in the Southern District; and that the above Rev. gentlemen do make a report thereon to the Superior, who shall notify the same to the next General Chapter.<sup>13</sup>

We have a glimpse into Carroll's attitude when the election result was made known. Writing to Father Plowden shortly afterwards, in May, 1789, he says: "The event was such as deprived me of all expectation of rest or pleasure henceforward, and fills me with terror with respect to eternity. I am so stunned with the issue of this business, that I truly hate the hearing or mention of it; and, therefore, will say only that since my brethren, whom in this case I consider the interpreters of the Divine Will, say I must obey, I will even do it, if by obeying I shall sacrifice henceforth every moment of peace and satisfaction."<sup>14</sup> The prefect-apostolic knew by bitter experience "that while the office

<sup>13</sup> HUGHES, *l.c.*, p. 686.

<sup>14</sup> BRENT, *op. cit.*, pp. 108-109.

brought no pomp or emolument, its cares and anxieties would increase day by day. But to decline the appointment would inevitably have led to the nomination in Europe of some one entirely unacquainted with the country, and the Catholic clergy and laity in it, as well as with their actual position.”<sup>15</sup> Some months later, on October 23, 1789, he wrote to Plowden :

If I could persuade myself, dear sir, to follow your example, in refusing peremptorily to submit to the choice of my brethren, I have much reason to think it would be better for our holy religion, and certainly to my greater ease of mind; but having previously used all my sincere endeavours to divert them from such a choice; I cannot but acquiesce in it, as it was unanimous, excepting one vote. At the same time, my own knowledge of myself informs me better than a thousand voices to the contrary that I am entirely unfit for a station, in which I can have no hopes of rendering service, but through His help and continual direction, Who has called me to it, when I was doing all in my power to prevent it. The interest you take in a late event, proves the warmth of your friendship; but it proves likewise, how blind and partial friends are liable to be. Your condolence would have suited better the situation of my mind; every day furnishes me with new reflections, and almost every day produces new events, to alarm my conscience, and excite fresh solicitude at the prospect before me.<sup>16</sup>

The Brief *Ex hac apostolicae* appointing John Carroll first Bishop of the United States was issued on November 6, 1789, and shortly afterwards, on November 14, Antonelli wrote to Carroll the following truly admirable letter :

We cannot sufficiently express in words the extraordinary delight that we felt when that distinguished convention of the Clergy assembled under the call of this Congregation cast an almost unanimous vote for you, and designated you to occupy the new See of Baltimore. For, in the first place, we entertain the highest hopes that the Christian people, being strengthened in the faith by the consolation of having a new Bishop, will grow stronger and firmer in the practice of the faith. Then we congratulate ourselves, that in the conferring of this additional dignity, you have been nominated by the clergy. For, such is the opinion that we have already formed of your deserts, that we can entertain no doubts but that you will fully satisfy the requirements of this new honour and of the burdens that it imposes. Our Holy Father Pius VI shared also in the joy that we experienced since he had formerly appointed you Vicar-Apostolic in those States, and he most gladly embraced the opportunity

<sup>15</sup> SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 335.

<sup>16</sup> BRENT, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-110; cf. HUGHES, *l.c.*, p. 688.

of increasing your dignity, and, therefore, with the plenitude of Apostolic authority he has declared you to be the new Bishop of Baltimore by Apostolic Letters which are herewith transmitted to you. Consequently, we congratulate you on this new accession of dignity, and earnestly exhort you, that relying upon divine aid, you undertake with promptitude of spirit the care of the flock intrusted to you. It is a glorious thing and a great distinction to be able to offer to God the first fruits, as it were, of that vineyard. Rejoice, therefore, in so great a blessing, as well for your own benefit, as for the salvation of others, and the promotion of the Catholic faith, which we confidently trust will strike deeper and deeper roots as time goes on in the wide extended territories of that new world. That you may not be destitute of the faculties which the Apostolic See is accustomed to grant to the Bishops of the Indies and of America, we enclose to you the first formula of them which you can make use of for those of your Diocese, as you may wisely in the Lord judge to be expedient; nevertheless, make use also of the faculties, as Bishop, which were formerly granted to you as Vicar-Apostolic. If you stand in need of any other whatsoever, refer the whole matter to me carefully, and whatever is required for the spiritual benefit of your people I shall not refuse. As soon as possible, make a personal visitation of all the Provinces and the districts inhabited by Catholics, correct evil customs, put an end to abuses, exhort the missionaries to be energetic in the performance of their duties, suffer no one to undertake the care of souls and administer the Sacraments without your permission. If you be short-handed for Priests see to it, as to what country it is best to invite recruits from but take care lest quarrels and dissensions may arise from the diversity of character and disposition which generally exists amongst the natives of different countries. For which reason, principally, we do not permit Italian priests to go thither; and besides, they very rarely speak English. *Impose not lightly hands on any man:* but enlist amongst the Clergy only such as have given proof of piety and learning in the Seminary. For the rest, may God preserve you long for the benefit and increase of that Church.<sup>17</sup>

The *Ex hac apostolicae* is the first, and therefore the most venerable, of all papal documents which have been sent by the Holy See to the church in America.<sup>18</sup> Shea calls it the crowning act in the development of Church organization in this country. A comparison of this Brief with similar documents both in the *Jus Pontificium* and in the *Bullarium Romanum* shows that it is a distinct original composition. The initial protocol might indeed

<sup>17</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Lettere*, vol. 255, f. 668; cf. *Fish-Devitt*, pp. 50-52.

<sup>18</sup> It will be found in the *Jus Pontificium de Propaganda Fide* (De Martinis), vol. iv, pp. 344-346. The original is in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, and a copy will be found (in Maréchal's hand?) in the *Letter-Books*, vol. i.



be the preface to any kind of a papal document, but it is evident that the Holy See recognized the historic moment which had come in Catholic American affairs at the time of John Carroll's election. The language is lofty, spiritual, commanding; and the disturbing elements that had appeared in the American Church are undoubtedly in mind. Every difficulty that had arisen in the relationship of Church and State in the United States, is boldly discussed, and no room is left for suspicion of any kind.

POPE PIUS VI

*Ad Futuram Rei Memoriam*

When from the eminence of our apostolical station, we bend our attention to the different regions of the earth, in order to fulfil, to the utmost extent of our power, the duty which our Lord has imposed upon our unworthiness of ruling and feeding his flock; our care and solicitude are particularly engaged that the faithful of Christ, who, dispersed through various provinces, are united with us by Catholic communion, may be governed by their proper pastors, and diligently instructed by them in the discipline of evangelical life and doctrine. For it is our principle that they who, relying on the divine assistance, have regulated their lives and manners agreeably to the precepts of Christian wisdom, ought so to command their own passions as to promote by the pursuit of justice their own and their neighbor's spiritual advantage; and that they who have received from their bishops, and by checking the intemperance of self-wisdom, have steadily adhered to the heavenly doctrine delivered by Christ to the Catholic Church, should not be carried away by every wind of doctrine, but, grounded on the authority of divine revelation, should reject the new and varying doctrines of men which endanger the tranquillity of government, and rest in the unchangeable faith of the Catholic Church. For in the present degeneracy of corrupt manners into which human nature, ever resisting the sweet yoke of Christ, is hurried, and in the pride of talents and knowledge which disdains to submit the opinions and dreams of men to the evangelical truth delivered by Jesus Christ, support must be given by the heavenly authority which is entrusted to the Catholic Church, as to a steady pillar and solid foundation which shall never fail; that from her voice and instructions mankind may learn the objects of their faith and the rules of their conduct, not only for the obtaining of eternal salvation, but also for the regulation of this life and the maintaining of concord in the society of this earthly city. Now, this charge of teaching and ruling first given to the apostles, and especially to St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, on whom alone the Church is built, and to whom our Lord and Redeemer entrusted the feeding of his lambs and of his sheep, has been derived in due order of succession to Bishops, and especially to the Roman Pontiffs, successors to St. Peter



and heirs of his power and dignity, that thereby it might be made evident that the gates of hell can never prevail against the Church, and that the divine founder of it will ever assist it to the consummation of ages; so that neither in the depravity of morals nor in the fluctuation of novel opinions, the episcopal succession shall ever fail or the bark of Peter be sunk. Wherefore, it having reached our ears that in the flourishing commonwealth of the Thirteen American States many faithful Christians united in communion with the chair of Peter, in which the centre of Catholic unity is fixed, and governed in their spiritual concerns by their own priests having care of souls, earnestly desire that a Bishop may be appointed over them to exercise the functions of episcopal order; to feed them more largely with the food of salutary doctrine, and to guard more carefully that portion of the Catholic flock:

We willingly embraced this opportunity which the grace of Almighty God has afforded us to provide those distant regions with the comfort and ministry of a Catholic Bishop. And that this might be effected more successfully, and according to the rules of the sacred canons, We commissioned our venerable Brethren the Cardinals of the holy Roman Church, directors of the Congregation "*de propaganda fide*," to manage this business with the greatest care, and to make a report to us. It was therefore appointed by their decree, approved by us, and published the twelfth day of July of the last year, that the priests who lawfully exercise the sacred ministry and have care of souls in the United States of America, should be empowered to advise together and to determine, first, in what town the episcopal see ought to be erected, and next, who of the aforesaid priests appeared the most worthy and proper to be promoted to this important charge, whom We, for the first time only and by special grace permitted the said priests to elect and to present to this apostolic See. In obedience to this decree the aforesaid priests exercising the care of souls in the United States of America, unanimously agreed that a bishop with ordinary jurisdiction, ought to be established in the town of Baltimore, because this town situate in Maryland, which province the greater part of the priests and of the faithful inhabit, appeared the most conveniently placed for intercourse with the other States, and because from this province Catholic religion and faith had been propagated into the others. And at the time appointed for the election, they being assembled together, the sacrifice of Holy Mass, being celebrated, and the grace and assistance of the Holy Ghost being implored, the votes of all present were taken, and of twenty-six priests who were assembled twenty-four gave their votes for our beloved son, John Carroll, whom they judged the most proper to support the burden of episcopacy, and sent an authentic instrument of the whole transaction to the aforesaid Congregation of Cardinals. Now all things being materially weighed and considered in this Congregation, it was easily agreed that the interests and increase of Catholic religion would be greatly promoted if an episcopal see were erected at Baltimore, and the said John Carroll were appointed the Bishop of it. We, therefore, to whom this opinion has

been reported by our beloved son, Cardinal Antonelli, Prefect of the said Congregation, having nothing more at heart than to ensure success to whatever tends to the propagation of true religion, and to the honor and increase of the Catholic Church, by the plenitude of our apostolical power, and by the tenor of these presents, do establish and erect the aforesaid town of Baltimore into an episcopal see forever, for one Bishop to be chosen by us in all future vacancies; and We, therefore, by the apostolical authority aforesaid, do allow, grant and permit to the Bishop of the said city and to his successors in all future times, to exercise episcopal power and jurisdiction, and every other episcopal function which Bishops constituted in other places are empowered to hold and enjoy in their respective churches, cities and dioceses, by right, custom, or by other means, by general privileges, graces, indults and apostolical dispensations, together with all pre-eminences, honors, immunities, graces and favours, which other Cathedral Churches, by right or custom, or in any other sort, have, hold and enjoy. We moreover decree and declare the said Episcopal see thus erected to be subject or suffragan to no Metropolitan right or jurisdiction, but to be forever subject, immediately to us and to our successors the Roman Pontiffs, and to this Apostolical See. And, till another opportunity shall be presented to us of establishing other Catholic Bishops in the United States of America, and till other dispositions shall be made by this Apostolical See, We declare, by our apostolical authority, all the faithful of Christ, living in Catholic communion, ecclesiastics as well as seculars, and all the clergy and people dwelling in the aforesaid United States of America, though hitherto they may have been subject to other Bishops of other dioceses, to be henceforth subject to the Bishop of Baltimore in all future times; And whereas by special grant, and for this time only, we have allowed the priests exercising the care of souls in the United States of America, to elect a person to be appointed Bishop by us, and almost all their votes have been given to our beloved Son, John Carroll, Priest; We being otherwise certified of his faith, prudence, piety and zeal, forasmuch as by our mandate he hath during the late years directed the spiritual government of souls, do therefore by the plenitude of our authority, declare, create, appoint and constitute the said John Carroll, Bishop of and Pastor of the said Church of Baltimore, granting to him the faculty of receiving the rite of consecration from any Catholic bishop holding communion with the apostolical see, assisted by two ecclesiastics, vested with some dignity, in case that two bishops cannot be had, first having taken the usual oath according to the Roman Pontifical.

And we commission the said Bishop elect to erect a church in the said city of Baltimore, in form of a Cathedral Church, inasmuch as the times and circumstances may allow, to constitute a body of clergy deputed to divine worship, and to the service of the said church, and moreover to establish an episcopal seminary, either in the same city or elsewhere, as he shall judge most expedient, to administer ecclesiastical incomes, and to execute all other things which he shall think in the Lord to be





expedient for the increase of Catholic faith and the augmentation of the worship and splendour of the newly erected church. We moreover enjoin the said Bishop to obey the injunctions of our venerable brethren, the Cardinals Directors of the Sacred Congregation "de propaganda fide," to transmit to them at proper times a relation of his visitation of his church, and to inform them of all things which he shall judge to be useful to the spiritual good and salvation of the flock trusted to his charge. We therefore decree that these our letters are and ever shall be firm, valid, and efficacious, and shall obtain their full and entire effect and be observed inviolable by all persons whom it now doth or hereafter may concern; and that all judges ordinary and delegated, even auditors of causes of the sacred apostolical palace, and Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, must thus judge and define, depriving all and each of them of all power and authority to judge or interpret in any other manner, and declaring all to be null and void, if any one by any authority should presume, either knowingly or unknowingly, to attempt anything contrary thereunto. Notwithstanding all apostolical, general, or special constitutions and ordinations, published in universal, provincial and synodical councils, and all things contrary whatsoever.

Given at Rome at St. Mary Major, under the Fisherman's Ring, the 6th day of November, 1789, and in the fifteenth year of our Pontificate.<sup>19</sup>

That there was no hesitancy on the part of the Roman authorities in selecting Dr. Carroll for this important post is evident from Thorpe's letters for 1789, as well as from the letters sent by Charles Plowden to his American friend. Plowden was so sure of Carroll's selection that he wrote on February 3, 1789, his surprise that Carroll had not been already consecrated.<sup>20</sup> There are several references in Thorpe's letter to a promise made by Carroll to send or to bring some Virginia tobacco to Cardinal Borromeo, and when Cardinal Borgia heard of its arrival, he laid claim to a portion of the package.<sup>21</sup> The place of his consecration was in doubt. Plowden wrote on November 1, 1789, that since the See of Havana was vacant, he hoped it would be an additional motive for Carroll's acceptance of Mr. Welds's invitation to be consecrated in England.<sup>22</sup> Cardinal Antonelli expressed a preference for Quebec, but left Carroll free to choose, and when the bishop-elect announced to Thorpe that he would go to England, Antonelli asked the reason, since Quebec was

<sup>19</sup> Translation as given by SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, pp. 337-343.

<sup>20</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 6-L1.

<sup>21</sup> Thorpe to Carroll, March 6, 1789, and July 8, 1789, *ibid.*, Case 8-J4, J8.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, Case 6-I7.



much nearer. Thorpe explained that Dr. Carroll had many friends in England, and that he could better provide for the services in the cathedral at Baltimore by purchases made in England; moreover, Thorpe wisely added, that since America needed priests badly, Carroll's presence in England would enable him to make his choice of volunteers personally. Apart from his "unwary promise" to Mr. Weld, there is no other reason given in his correspondence for the choice of England. No doubt his unfortunate experience in Montreal and Quebec at the hands of the ecclesiastical authorities there, in 1776, was still fresh in his mind; and a further reason may have been his unwillingness to meet the Bishop of Quebec at a time when the frontiers of their respective jurisdictions were under discussion before the Holy See. We have no means of knowing what occupied his attention, apart from diocesan duties between his election and his departure in July, 1790. One very important fact in the history of the Catholic Church in this country occurred, however, at this time—the Address of the Catholics to President George Washington.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE ADDRESS FROM THE ROMAN CATHOLICS TO WASHINGTON

(1790)

In an appendix to the twelfth volume of his edition of the Writings of George Washington, Jared Sparks has entered into the religious opinions of the first President of the United States. Sparks is decidedly an untrustworthy historian, but the testimonies he has collected prove beyond doubt that Washington always expressed the sincere wish that amity and concord on religious questions should prevail in the national life. It is in the light of this principle that Washington's replies to the various addresses, presented to him after his election by the religious bodies of the country, should be viewed. He received these congratulatory addresses from nearly every denomination in the United States. They are all written in the same vein. They compliment his character for justice and truth. They express deep gratitude for his long and eminent public services to the nation. In his replies, it would have been impolitic to employ language "indicating a decided preference for the peculiar tenets or forms of any particular church. He took a wiser course; the only one, indeed, which with propriety could be taken. He approved the general objects, and commended the zeal, of all religious congregations and societies by which he was addressed, spoke of their beneficial effects in promoting the welfare of mankind, declared his cordial wishes for their success, and often concluded with his prayers for the future happiness of the individuals belonging to them, both in this world and in the world to come."<sup>1</sup>

In his Farewell Address to the people of the United States (September 17, 1796) Washington restated the old philosophic maxim that "of all the dispositions and habits which lead to

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<sup>1</sup> SPARKS, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 410-411.

political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports;" and in every reply he emphasized this fact. He lost no opportunity of reiterating the necessity of religious freedom, if the Republic was to endure. Some of these replies are worthy of notice for the sake of comparison with his reply to the American Catholics. To the bishops, clergy and laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church, he wrote (August 19, 1789): "On this occasion it would ill-become me to conceal the joy I have felt in perceiving the fraternal affection which appears to increase every day among the friends of genuine religion. It affords edifying prospects, indeed, to see Christians of different denominations dwell together in more charity, and conduct themselves in respect to each other with a more Christian-like spirit, than ever they have done in any former age or in any other nation."<sup>2</sup> To the Quakers, he replied (October, 1789): "The liberty enjoyed by the people of the States, of worshiping Almighty God agreeably to their consciences, is not only among the choicest of their blessings, but also of their rights."<sup>3</sup> In January, 1793, he wrote to a non-Catholic congregation of Baltimore: "We have abundant reason to rejoice that in this land the light of truth and reason has triumphed over the powers of bigotry and superstition, and that every person may here worship God according to the dictates of his own heart. In this enlightened age, and in this land of equal liberty, it is our boast that a man's religious tenets will not forfeit the protection of the laws, nor deprive him of the right of attaining and holding the highest offices that are known in the United States."<sup>4</sup>

There is a pompous tone, it is true, about these statements, and had he simply repeated their tenor to the American Catholics, his reply would have little value in the Catholic history of the young Republic. But he sounds another note to the Catholics. The letter is presumably to them; but he is speaking, and perhaps with design, to the great non-Catholic population of the nation.

The Address of the Catholics was signed by John Carroll,<sup>5</sup> in behalf of the Roman Catholic clergy; and by Charles Carroll of

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<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 162-163.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 168-169.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 201-202.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 177-179, under date of December, 1789.

Carrollton; Daniel Carroll, the brother of the newly-elected bishop; Dominick Lynch, the leading Catholic of New York City; and Thomas Fitzsimons, the leading Catholic of the day in Philadelphia; these four gentlemen signed the Address in behalf of the Roman Catholic laity. The Address is as follows:

We have been long impatient to testify our joy, and unbounded confidence on your being called, by an Unanimous Vote, to the first station of a country, in which that unanimity could not have been obtained, without the previous merit of unexampled services, of eminent wisdom, and unblemished virtue. Our congratulations have not reached you sooner, because our scattered situation prevented our communication, and the collecting of those sentiments, which warmed every breath. But the delay has furnished us with the opportunity, not merely of presaging the happiness to be expected under your Administration, but of bearing testimony to that which we experience already. It is your peculiar talent, in war and in peace, to afford security to those who commit their protection into your hands. In war you shield them from the ravages of armed hostility; in peace, you establish public tranquillity, by the justice and moderation, not less than by the vigour, of your government. By example, as well as by vigilance, you extend the influence of laws on the manners of our fellow-citizens. You encourage respect for religion; and inculcate, by words and actions, that principle, on which the welfare of nations so much depends, that a superintending providence governs the events of the works, and watches over the conduct of men. Your exalted maxims, and unwearied attention to the moral and physical improvement of our country, have produced already the happiest effects. Under your administration, America is animated with zeal for the attainment and encouragement of useful literature. She improves her agriculture; extends her commerce; and acquires with foreign nations a dignity unknown to her before. From these events, in which none can feel a warmer interest than ourselves, we derive additional pleasure, by recollecting that you, Sir, have been the principal instrument to effect so rapid a change in our political situation. This prospect of national prosperity is peculiarly pleasing to us, on another account; because, whilst our country preserves her freedom and independence, we shall have a well founded title to claim from her justice, the equal rights of citizenship, as the price of our blood spilt under your eyes, and of our common exertions for her defence, under your auspicious conduct—rights rendered more dear to us by the remembrance of former hardships. When we pray for the preservation of them, where they have been granted—and expect the full extension of them from the justice of those States, which still restrict them: when we solicit the protection of Heaven over our common country, we neither omit, nor can omit recommending your preservation to the singular care of Divine Providence; because we conceive that no human means are so available to promote the welfare of the United

States, as the prolongation of your health and life, in which are included the energy of your example, the wisdom of your counsels, and the persuasive eloquence of your virtues.

Washington's answer to the Roman Catholics of the United States of America, dated March 12, 1790, is as follows:

*Gentlemen,*

While I now receive, with much satisfaction, your congratulations on my being called, by a unanimous Vote, to the first station in my Country—I cannot but duly notice your politeness in offering an apology for the unavoidable delay. As that delay has given you an opportunity of realizing, instead of anticipating, the benefits of the general Government—you will do me the justice to believe, that your testimony of the increase of the public prosperity, enhances the pleasure, which I should otherwise have experienced from your affectionate Address.

I feel that my conduct, in war and in peace, has met with more general approbation, than could have reasonably been expected; and I find myself disposed to consider, that fortunate circumstances, in a great degree resulting from the able support, and extraordinary candour, of my fellow-citizens of all denominations.

The prospect of National prosperity now before us, is truly animating; and ought to excite the exertions, of all good men, to establish and secure the happiness of their Country, in the permanent duration of its freedom and independence. America, under the smiles of Divine Providence—the protection of a good Government—and the cultivation of Manners, Morals, and Piety—cannot fail of attaining, an uncommon degree of Eminence, in Literature, Commerce, Agriculture, Improvements at home, and Respectability abroad.

As Mankind becomes more liberal, they will be more apt to allow, that all those who conduct themselves worthy members of the Community, are equally entitled to the protection of Civil Government. I hope ever to see America among the foremost Nations in examples of Justice and Liberality. And I presume that your fellow-citizens will not forget the patriotic part, which you took in the accomplishment of their Revolution, and the establishment of their Government—or the important assistance, which they received from a Nation, in which the Roman Catholic Faith is professed.

I thank you, Gentlemen, for your kind concern for me. While my Life and Health shall continue, in whatever situation I may be, it shall be my constant endeavor to justify the favourable sentiments which you are pleased to express of my conduct. And may the Members of your Society in America, animated alone by the pure spirit of Christianity, and still conducting themselves, as the faithful subjects of our free Government, enjoy every temporal, and spiritual felicity.



The original copy of this precious document was in the Cathedral Archives at Baltimore until 1865, when it was loaned to John Gilmary Shea on December 19, of that year. Shea returned it to Baltimore on September 7, 1866. In 1908, it was discovered that the letter was missing and from that time till the present, diligent search has failed to reveal this valuable page in American Catholic history. There is no doubt that John Carroll took a copy of the *Address* and Washington's original answer to England with him in 1790, for it was published in London by J. P. Coghlan, in 1790, with the following preface:

The following Address from the Roman Catholics, which was copied from the American News papers—whilst it breathes fidelity to the States which protect them, asserts, with decency, the common-rights of mankind; and the answer of the President truly merits that esteem, which his liberal sentiments, mild administration, and prudent justice have obtained him. . . . Is this not a lesson? Britons remain intolerant and inexorable to the claims of sound policy and of nature. Ties of kindred and friends—whose sacred aspiration—alas, to NOMINAL LIBERTY, suffers the fettering sanguinary edicts still to blacken her golden eras—exile some of her most valuable subjects, and divide their interests, or force their religious compliance to disguise and debase principles, which, if suffered to practise, would constitute and confirm the most lasting affection to their Prince and the country which gives them birth. Is it true policy, that the Roman Catholics should become voluntary exiles for the free practice of their faith—to educate their children—to study for their ministry—or retire to their sacred Cloister?—and this only to serve God in thir own way—not a different God, but adored equally by all! Whilst it is an acknowledged fact, there are laws sufficient to make men, good citizens and good subjects—where is the boasted liberty which suffers not a disposal of ourselves, but aims so effectually to shackle and annihilate the soul from God. Britons, view and blush!

Washington's reply has brought joy to the hearts of all American Catholics since that time; but it was especially to the Catholics of 1790 that the encomium of the first President meant much in the way of patience and encouragement. A writer signing himself "Liberal," published at the time an attack on the extension of religious liberty to Catholics, in the *Gazette of the United States*. Bishop-elect Carroll promptly took up the challenge, and replied in June, 1789, in the same publication. He accused "Liberal" of an attempt to revive an odious system of religious intolerance. The world was weary with the bigotry of such men. "Liberal"

was among those who thought it consistent with justice to exclude Catholics from public honours and emoluments on account of their faith. "If such be 'Liberal's' views, in vain then have Americans associated themselves into one great national union, under the express condition of not being shackled by religious tests, and under a firm persuasion that they were to retain, when associated, every natural right not expressly surrendered. It is not pretended that they who are the objects of an intended exclusion from certain offices of honour and advantage, have forfeited by any act of treason against the United States, the common rights of nature, or the stipulated rights of the political society of which they form a part? This the author has not presumed to assert. Their blood flowed as freely (in proportion to their numbers) to cement the fabric of independence, as that of any of their fellow-citizens. They concurred with perhaps greater unanimity than any other body of men, in recommending and promoting that government from whose influence America anticipates all the blessings of justice, peace, plenty, good order, and civil and religious liberty. What character shall we then give to a system of politics, calculated for the express purpose of divesting of rights legally acquired those citizens who are not only unoffending, but whose conduct has been highly meritorious? I am anxious to guard against the impression intended by such insinuations; not merely for the sake of any one profession, but from an earnest regard to preserve inviolate forever in our new empire the great principle of religious freedom. The constitutions of some of the States continue still to entrench on the sacred rights of conscience, and men who have bled and opened their purses as freely, in the cause of liberty and independence, as any other citizen, are most unjustly excluded from the advantages which they contributed to establish. But if bigotry and narrow prejudices have hitherto prevented the cure of these evils, be it the duty of every lover of peace and justice to extend them no further."



CHAPEL AT LULWORTH CASTLE



## CHAPTER XXI

### CARROLL'S CONSECRATION

(August 15, 1790)

It is not certain when Antonelli's letter of November 14, 1789, which probably accompanied the Brief *Ex hac apostolicae* of November 6, 1789, reached Carroll's hands; nor are we sure of the channel through which these documents came. France was in disorder at the time, though the Revolution had not reached such a stage that couriers might not pass through the country. The Brief had not arrived by February 6, 1790, when Carroll wrote to Antonelli, explaining that his long delay in replying to the Cardinal-Prefect's letter of June 11, 1789, was due to the fact that although elected by his fellow-priests to the office of bishop, he did not wish to write anything which might influence the Holy Father or the Sacred Congregation in confirming his election. "Rather did I spend the time in prayer," he writes, "that the whole affair would be reconsidered by Rome and that another, much more worthy than myself be elected to the episcopate."<sup>1</sup> During the delay, however, he had heard through private communications that his election was concurred in by the Holy See and that the pontifical Brief was on its way. "My only consolation is that, not by my own will, but in spite of my expectation, this portion of labour and solicitude has fallen to me; so that, if it has come about by the wish of Divine Providence, He, as I truly hope, will aid me, Who has destined me for such a heavy burden."<sup>2</sup> There is little in his letter of March 16, 1790, to Plowden, that helps us to ascertain the date in question, except the statement that he had heard from Father Thorpe—"from its contents and . . . purport . . . I dread the arrival of the packet of January . . ." The probable date is April, as we learn from the following letter of Thomas Weld to Bishop Walmesley:

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<sup>1</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scritture originali*, vol. 893 (not folioed).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



I am obliged to your Lordship for your last kind letter, was glad to find by it you was well and than [*sic*] we would have the pleasure of your company. I have now a great favor to beg of yr. Lordship. You must know that the Revd. Mr. Carroll in Maryland has lately been appointed Bishop of Baltimore by the Pope, he only received his bulls in April last, by which he is appointed Bishop, to fix his see where he thinks most proper and get himself Consecrated where he finds it most Convenient. He is now Coming to England for that purpose, and as he is an acquaintance of mine and a great friend of Mr. Plowdens I invited him to my house to be Consecrated in my Chapel if yr. Lordship and Mr. Sharrock have no Objection to perform the Ceremony.

I should be glad to have the favour of an answer & if yr. Lordship has no objection if you could come here a week or two sooner than what you mention it would be the more agreeable for I expect Mr. Carroll may be here in a fort-night or three weeks, and I apprehend he will be in a hurry to return. I think if this meets with yr. Lordship's approbation the less it is spoken off the better, the more private it can be done the better. I suppose yr. Lordship has seen Mr. Throckmorton's publication on the elections of Bishops you see what things are come to, and what they will come to and where our afflictions will end the Lord only knows.

Mrs. Weld and all here unite in compts. to yr. Lordship, I remain with the gtest. regard yr. obdt. humble servt.<sup>3</sup>

This would indicate that the bishop-elect had written at once to his friend at Lulworth Castle, to whom he had given the promise that he would come to the home of the Weld family for consecration.

One of his last letters before leaving America was a declaration regarding the administration of the ex-Jesuit property. In the *Ex hac apostolicae* the words "to administer ecclesiastical incomes, etc.", were a mere formula of office. But some of his fellow priests, particularly Ashton, the Procurator, took alarm; and in order to allay any misgivings, Carroll wrote out a declaration on May 26, 1790, to the effect that he did not consider himself empowered in any way to interfere in the management of the old Jesuit estates.<sup>4</sup>

The exact date of Carroll's departure from Baltimore is not known. Shea says that he sailed for England early in the summer of 1790. (The date is probably June 9, 1790.) Dr. Carroll's

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<sup>3</sup> *Clifton Diocesan Archives*, printed in the *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. i, pp. 250-251.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, p. 699.

choice of England as the place of his consecration was due to several causes, but chief among them was his promise to the Welds, whom he had last seen in 1774, that if the episcopate should be bestowed upon him, he would return to their home for consecration. Archbishop Troy wrote on January 25, 1790, inviting Carroll to come to Dublin, but this letter reached him after he had written to Mr. Weld accepting his hospitality. On July 23, the day after his arrival in London, Dr. Carroll despatched a letter to the Metropolitan of Dublin, explaining the reason for his choice of Lulworth: "When the subject of an American Bishopric was first started, I received so pressing an invitation from a most respectable Catholic gentleman in England, that I *unwarily* promised to be consecrated in his chapel, if the appointment should fall to my lot. Had it been otherwise I should have hesitated between Ireland, the land of my forefathers, and Canada, though, on the whole, I flatter myself that my going to England may be attended with some advantages to the cause of religion within my extensive diocese."<sup>5</sup>

The presence of his former Liège colleague and his faithful friend, Father Charles Plowden, then the chaplain to the Welds at Lulworth, had its potent influence upon his choice. Writing to Plowden on May 8, 1789, he says: "I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the most obliging and honorable testimony of Mr. Weld's regard: you will be pleased to express with all that warmth which you can communicate to your expressions, my deep sense of his generous politeness. My inclination certainly leads me to accept of an offer not only so flattering, but which will afford me an opportunity of seeing some of those friends whom I shall ever honor and love. But I cannot yet determine what I shall do. I still flatter myself that Divine Providence will provide some worthier subject to be its instrument in founding a church in America."<sup>6</sup>

At any rate, he was on the high seas in July, 1790, and had as a companion during his voyage over and back, Dr. Madison, of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Virginia, who was likewise making the voyage to be consecrated bishop of his own Church. While at sea Father Carroll began a letter to Cardinal Antonelli.

<sup>5</sup> MORAN, *Spicilegium Ossoriense*, vol. iii, pp. 507-508.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 354.

This letter, finished in London on July 30, 1790, is the first that he signed as bishop-elect. When the letter of His Eminence of November 14, 1789, was first handed to him, although it contained nothing more than what he had been told to expect, he could not but feel deeply moved. When he considered the dignity which had been conferred upon him, he says in his reply, he felt how far short he fell of the sanctity of the episcopal character, and his courage gave way. The hopes placed upon him by the Cardinal-Prefect and by the Sacred Congregation were so great that he saw no way of fulfilling them. Certainly the benevolence of the Congregation would strengthen his determination to perform as well as possible the work which lay ahead. He then spoke of the college project under way at home and of the lack of priests, and told the Cardinal-Prefect that he expected to spend at least a month in England. He arrived in London on July 22, 1790, and the first news he heard was that the renegade Poterie had sent to the Sacred Congregation his *Resurrection of Laurent Ricci*, a book filled with accusations against Carroll and his clergy. Unfortunately, he had not foreseen this, and had left behind him in America the documents necessary for a defence of his action in La Poterie's case. When he returned he would send copies of these documents, and he hoped that they would relieve Antonelli of any doubt in the matter.<sup>7</sup>

This letter had not reached Rome by August 14, 1790, for there is no mention of it in Antonelli's letter of that date to Carroll. The Cardinal-Prefect expressed the great pleasure felt by the Holy See and by the Sacred Congregation over Carroll's acceptance of the bishopric, and especially so, because in no way did Carroll try to bring it about. The new bishop was informed

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<sup>7</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. 2, f. 390—"Haec scribo in ipsa navigatione versus Angliam, ut in ea, aut finitimis Belgii provinciis characteri episcopali insigniar. Post unius circiter mensis in Europa moram, rursus me mari committam . . ." No doubt, the reference to Belgium signifies his alternative, in case any difficulty should arise over the consecration of an American Catholic Bishop in England. As it turned out, all who participated in his consecration advised the utmost privacy. On July 30, 1790, he added a postscript to this letter—"Ante octo dies huc tuto appulsus. . . ." Plowden had written on May 31, 1790, advising him to borrow two *Pontificalia* before reaching Lulworth (*Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 6-M5). In this same letter Plowden says: "Mr. Weld desires that you will not put yourself to the expense of a pectoral cross, as he has one to present to you, which he hopes you will accept and like. It is rich, curious, and respectable, formerly the property of the last Abbot of Colchester."

that Poterie's letter and pamphlet had reached them, and that the Sacred Congregation considered the Boston priest's charges unfounded. To prevent similar attacks, namely, that Carroll was secretly working for the restoration of the Society of Jesus in the United States and that he preferred ex-Jesuits to others in the missions, Antonelli advised him to employ others than former members of the Society. He refers to the disordered condition of France and hints that many priests might be found there willing to go to the States.<sup>8</sup>

Father John Carroll's consecration as Bishop of Baltimore, and, therefore, as Father of the American Hierarchy, took place in the Chapel of Lulworth Castle, on August 15, 1790.<sup>9</sup> The consecrating prelate was Bishop Charles Walmesley, O.S.B., V.A., of the Western District.<sup>10</sup> Three other priests were present: Father Charles Plowden and James Porter, who acted as Assistant Priests to Bishop Walmesley, and Father Forrester, who signs himself *Missionary Apostolic*, and who was chaplain at Wardour Castle.<sup>11</sup> During the consecration young Thomas Weld, then seventeen, and but recently married, the son of Bishop Carroll's host, held the Missal over his shoulders.<sup>12</sup> The ceremony of consecration was carried out with all the elegance of the ritual. Mr. Weld spared no expense to render the occasion a memorable one for the first American bishop. The official certificate of Dr. Carroll's consecration, now preserved in St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, is as follows:

<sup>8</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Lettere*, vol. 258, f. 497 (cf. HUGHES, *l.c.*, p. 689, for another version of this letter)—"Electio Amplitudinis Tuæ ad episcopatum Baltimorensis eo magis a Sanctissimo Domino Nostro et a Sacra hac Congregatione probata est, quod videremus te hujusmodi dignitatem non modo non expetiisse sed imo pro viribus curasse ut alter ad episcopale istud munus designaretur."

<sup>9</sup> Cf. C. M. ANTONY, *Lulworth Castle: its history and memories in the Catholic Historical Review*, vol. i, pp. 243-257. The writer of this article searched all the existing files of the London newspapers from August to December, 1790, to find some reference to Bishop Carroll's consecration; but in vain. Also contemporary files of the Boston and New York newspapers were searched, with the same result.

<sup>10</sup> Bishop Walmesley arrived at Lulworth on August 5, 1790; Plowden to Carroll, August 6, 1790 (*Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 6-M8).

<sup>11</sup> OLIVER, *Collections S.J.*, pp. 306-308, has an interesting sketch of this clergyman.

<sup>12</sup> After the death of his wife in 1815, Thomas Weld studied for the priesthood and was ordained in 1821. He was consecrated titular Bishop of Amyclæ in 1826, and was elevated to the Cardinalate in 1830. He died in 1837. The youngest daughter of his host, Teresa Weld, born in 1782, married (1803) William Vaughan, the grandfather of Cardinal Vaughan.

Hisce testatum facimus Reverendum Dnm. Joannem Carroll, presbyterum ad episcopatum Baltimorem electum, lectis litteris Apostolicis apud Sanctam Mariam Majorem datis, sub annulo Piscatoris die sexta Novembris 1789, et praestito prius ab ipso Electo juxta Pontificale Romanum juramento, assistensibus Revdo Carolo Plowden ac revdo Jacobo Porter, presbyteris, 15<sup>a</sup> Augusti 1790, sacra Beatissimae Virginis Assumptae die in templo Castelli de Lullworth comitatus Dorcestrensis in Anglia a nobis in Episcopum fuisse consecratum.

Dabamus ad Castellum de Lullworth die 17 Augusti anno 1790.

✠ CAROLUS WALMESLEY, *Epus Ramaten., Vic. Aplicus.*

CAROLUS PLOWDEN, *sac., assistens.*

JACOBUS PORTER, *sac., assistens.*

C. FORRESTER, *presbyter, Miss. Apost.*

THOMAS STANLEY, *sac.*<sup>13</sup>

As Shea writes:

The United States now had, at last, a Catholic Bishop, but he stood alone in a foreign land, without resources for his great work; viewed politically by many as one of a nation of successful rebels; ecclesiastically as a member of an Order struck down by the Head of the Church and scattered to the winds. In the city selected as his episcopal see, he had no church beyond a plain brick structure completed in 1783; his small band of priests was constantly thinned by the hand of death, and there was no source to which he could look for others to replace the dead. Though urged by the Holy See to establish a Seminary he had no income, and no one but Providence to whom he could look for his own support and the immense task which had been imposed upon him.<sup>14</sup>

At Lulworth Castle he was among friends, and the Welds urged him to remain with them for a long stay, but he was eager to return to America. After a visit of several weeks, he went up to London to prepare for the journey home. He found here at his lodgings, 28 King Street, letters from many correspondents. Father Thorpe's letter of July 7, 1790, gave him the news that the French Scioto Company had made strong representations to the Holy See, to appoint a bishop for their Gallipolis colony, but that Dom Didier had been given only provisional faculties. Father Thorpe also informed him of the plan the Sulpicians of Paris had under consideration of applying to Dr. Carroll for permission

<sup>13</sup> Cf. SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 364, for printed fac-simile.

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 363.



to found a Seminary in the Diocese of Baltimore.<sup>15</sup> Father Thorpe's letters of August 11 and 21, 1790, reached London early in September. In the first of these, he relates a conversation with Cardinal Antonelli regarding the unruly spirits in the American Church, and the Cardinal-Prefect gave the age-old answer to such problems: Carroll was now a bishop, with all the power and dignity of that great office; his was the duty to control all the spiritual elements within his jurisdiction; there was but one sure way—*utatur jure suo!* This letter also speaks of the objectionable clauses in the oath of consecration and Dr. Carroll is told that the Holy See will make any reasonable change in the oath in order to avoid anything disagreeable to the American spirit.<sup>16</sup> On August 21, 1790, Thorpe wrote again, sending to Dr. Carroll the congratulations of all the officials of Propaganda.<sup>17</sup> In a subsequent letter from Thorpe (August 28, 1790) we learn that Dr. Carroll had written to his agent in Rome as early as July, 1790, asking him to ascertain the mind of Propaganda on the immediate appointment of a coadjutor-bishop. Father Thorpe advised him to wait until after he had returned to Baltimore before making this formal request. Another interesting communication came to Bishop Carroll from one of his relations, Ann Louisa Hill (Mother Ann of Our Blessed Lady) an American, who was Prioress of the English Carmelite Convent at Hoogstraet, after the departure of Mother Bernardine (Ann Matthews) for Port Tobacco (1790). Mother Ann's letter (Hoogstraet, August 9, 1790), is as follows:

*Hon'rd Sir:*

Being informed of your safe arrival into England, I cannot omit doing myself the honor & satisfaction of writing a few lines, both to felicitate you on the high & eminent Dignity to which Almighty God has raised you, too assuring you of our humble Respects & best wishes of a happy success in all your undertakings, we shall not fail to pray for every blessing & Benediction from heaven. I beg if you should come to these parts that you will honour us with a visit, your presence will be a great and signal comfort to me & all my dear Community. We heard that you, honoured Sir, had desired Mr. Charles Neale to return to

<sup>15</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 8-K5.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, Case 8-K6. The episcopal oath was changed (August, 1794) from the one prescribed in the Pontifical to that taken by the Bishops in Ireland.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, Case 8-K8.

Maryland with 3 or 4 Religious of our Holy Order to make there a Foundation of Carmelites, in consequence of which our worthy Superior the Rev'd Lord Bishop of Antwerp closed our much esteemed Superior, Mrs. Matthews, for that great work, her two nieces, & one of our Order of Antwerp accompanied her. They left us the 19th of April, the grief as well as the great loss we have sustained in parting with so valuable & so much esteemed a Superior is greater than I can express. What has aided much to the increase of my grief is that Providence has ordained me to be the person to succeed her in her office. I fear your absence will defer for some time the Foundation. It will be I am sensible a great disappointment to her; we have lately heard of the great loss our country has sustained in the Death of worthy Mr. Matthews, her worthy Brother; his death must be a real cross and affliction to her. I must acknowledge it as a subject of joy to me to hear our Holy Faith and Religion flourishes so much in my native country, & that Religious are permitted to make establishments there, & live up to the spirit of their H. Institutes. I am glad our Holy Order is the first, tho' must own at the same time, that myself & Community have made the greatest sacrifice we possibly could in parting with its worthy Foundress. We have distressed ourselves very much, but confide Almighty God will be thereby more Glorified & our Holy Religion much propagated in America. I add no more on this subject as I doubt not but you are apprised of the whole affair, it being undertaken'd by your desires & Request. I shall be glad Hon'd Sir to hear you are in perfect health, & that you left your Hon'd Mother, & all friends in the same, & of the prosperity of our Country, & if the Academy is finished, as I have heard it is under your Directions.

The worthy Superior of Antwerp & pious family begged me to present their humble Respects, & to assure you of their constant prayers for the happy Success of all your pious undertakings; I beg that you will accept of all That's most Respectful from myself & D'r Family, & be persuaded that we shall not fail of offering our prayers for you & all your pious intentions. I most earnestly recommend myself & them to your Holy prayers & have the Hon'r to remain with unalterable Esteem & profound Respect.

*Hon'd Sir*

*Your obed't Hum: serv't & cousin*

ANN LOUISA HILL<sup>18</sup>

Dr. Carroll was also invited by his old friends of Liège to pay them a visit,<sup>19</sup> but for some reason he declined; as he likewise declined the invitation of the Sulpicians to visit them in

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, Case 4-C4, printed in the *Records*, vol. xx, pp. 251-253; cf. GUILDAY, *English Catholic Refugees, etc.*, vol. i, p. 372.

<sup>19</sup> Father Stone to Carroll. Liège, August 20, 1790. *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 2-F12.

Paris. It may be that with France in a disturbed condition, he considered it more prudent to remain in England. Father Brosius, who was to have an exceptional career in the United States, wrote to him from Louvain, August 9, 1790, asking to be received into the new Diocese of Baltimore.<sup>20</sup> In September, Plowden wrote to say that Coghlan the printer was insisting upon publishing a pamphlet account of the consecration at Lulworth and wanted Plowden's sermon on that occasion.

Coghlan worries me for the translation of your Brief and the history of your consecration, and demonstrates the great advantage which the publication of the same would procure for Catholicity in England. He has sent me down the Bull to be translated and copied in answer to my letter wherein I had informed him that I could not do it. This is the Irish mode of doing business. Mr. Weld wishes that what was done here on August 15, may not appear in print unless you should desire it. I was amazed to hear last Friday that the few words which were spoken from the Altar on that occasion were printed without either my knowledge or consent. The impression must have come from the copy which Mr. F. [Forrester] requested that he might read it to the deaf bishop.<sup>21</sup>

On September 14, Plowden wrote again to Carroll, at London: "Coghlan will not relinquish his scheme of printing something about you. He has sent me a sketch of the title which he wishes to prefix to it and I think it will be very harmless and inoffensive."<sup>22</sup> Coghlan published before the end of the year a *Short Account of the Establishment of the New See of Baltimore, Maryland, and of Consecrating the Right Rev. Mr. Carroll*.<sup>23</sup> An abstract of Father Plowden's sermon, inserted in this pamphlet, is as follows:

Our Blessed Lord and Redcemer having defeated the powers of hell by the triumph of the cross, formed to himself a kingdom on earth which was to consist of the chosen of every nation, because all nations were now become his own by right of conquest. The Sun of Justice which rose from the East, has in its progress enlightened every region of the globe, and the kingdom of Christ, the church, under the government of his Vicar and of pastors deputed to him, has successively em-

<sup>20</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 2-B2.

<sup>21</sup> Plowden to Carroll, Lulworth, September 5, 1790, *ibid.*, Case 6-M10.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, Case 6-M11.

<sup>23</sup> Printed in the *Researches*, vol. vii, pp. 161-174; reprinted by the Historical Club. Baltimore, 1876. For Carroll's estimate of the *Short Account*, cf. HUGHES, *l.c.*, p. 694.

braced the whole world. Ages succeed ages, empires subvert empires, but the empire of Jesus Christ perseveres ever one and the same, ever persecuted and ever conquering, because all human revolutions are entirely subservient to it, and the formation of the kingdom of Christ is the ultimate object of the whole dispensation of providence in the government of this world. Never perhaps was this truth more sensibly evinced, than in the late violent convulsions, by which the hand of the Almighty has dismembered the great British empire, and has called forth into existence a new empire in the Western world, the destinies of which, we trust, are founded in His tenderest mercies. For although this great event may appear to us to have been the work, the sport of human passion, yet the earliest and most precious fruit of it has been the extension of the kingdom of Christ, the propagation of the Catholic religion, which heretofore fettered by restraining laws, is now enlarged from bondage and it is left at liberty to exert the full energy of divine truth. Already is catholicity extended to the utmost boundaries of the immense continent of America, thousands are there earnestly demanding Catholic instructors, and all penetrated with reverence for the apostolical See of St Peter have concurred to demand, from his successor a Catholic prelate, whose knowledge and whose zeal may establish the faith of Peter upon the ruin of those errors, which the first inhabitants carried forth with them from this country. But if Britain infected them with error, we have the consolation to know that their catholicity is also derived immediately from us; and as we in former ages received the faith of Rome from the great St. Gregory and our apostle St. Austin, so now at the interval of twelve hundred years, our venerable prelate the heir of the virtues and labours of our apostle, will, this day by commission from the successor of St. Gregory, consecrate the first Father and Bishop of the new church, destined as we confide, to inherit those benedictions which the first called have ungratefully rejected. Glorious is this day, my brethren, for the church of God which sees new nations crowding into her bosom; glorious for the prelate elect, who goes forth to conquer these nations for Jesus Christ, not by the efforts of human power, but in the might of those weapons which have ever triumphed in this divine warfare; he is not armed with the strength of this world, but he is powerful in piety, powerful in zeal, powerful in evangelical poverty and firm reliance on the protection of that God who sends him. Glorious in this event, for his numerous spiritual children, to whom his virtues have long endeared him, comforting it is to us who have been long connected with him by the virtuous ties of education, profession and friendship, but in a special manner, my brethren, honourable and comforting in this awful solemnity to his and our common benefactor, the founder of this holy sanctuary, which shall be revered through succeeding ages, even by churches yet unnamed, as the privileged, the happy spot, from whence their episcopacy and hierarchy took their immediate rise; and this precious distinction will be justly attributed to the protection and favor of the glorious mother of God whose house it is, and through whose patronage all Christian



churches are founded? On this her greatest solemnity, my brethren, it is your duty to implore the particular assistance of the great Queen of Heaven; and while you are edified by the solemn rites with which the Catholic Church consecrates her prelates, you will earnestly solicit the descent of the Holy Ghost on the Bishop elect, that like another Austin he may worthily fulfil the extent of his apostleship to which he is called, and when you implore for him the sevenfold grace of the Holy Spirit, you will not fail to demand it through the intercession of her whom you daily salute, "Mother of divine grace."

In full confidence of her protection and blessing upon our ministry, we proceed to the solemnity of the Consecration.

Before the end of September, Bishop Carroll had received at London, Cardinal Antonelli's two letters of August 14, 27, 1790.<sup>24</sup> The Cardinal-Prefect's letters on this occasion are couched in terms of affection and of the highest satisfaction over the happy beginning of hierarchical life in the Church of the United States. To these letters, Bishop Carroll replied on September 27, 1790, acknowledging Antonelli's great kindness. He described the ceremony at Lulworth and enclosed a copy of the authentication of his consecration. He announced his intention of leaving London within a week if the weather permitted. He hoped to be able to start studies at Georgetown College shortly after his return. The Gallipolis colony, which Antonelli mentioned in his letters, has left for America, he says, against his wishes. The territory they selected was within the borders of the United States, as could be seen on the map which he has forwarded through the Nuncio at Paris. Dr. Carroll added a word about the calumnies of Poterie and of Smyth. The first is destitute of all faith; and he had been asked by the Irish bishops, especially by the Archbishop of Dublin, not to notice the work of Smyth. In replying to Antonelli about the charge that he had employed only ex-Jesuits in the American missions, he said that as prefect-apostolic he had commissioned thirty priests. Of these, seven only were ex-Jesuits, the others not being former members of the Society. He made it quite clear to the cardinal that he understood very well that there can be no restoration of the Society without the express permission and authority of the Holy See. At the end of this letter, Bishop Carroll announced to Antonelli the visit paid to him at London, by Father Nagot, the Sulpician, who had come from

<sup>24</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9A-A1-3.



Paris to discuss the question of founding a Seminary in Baltimore.<sup>25</sup> Not knowing how correspondence addressed to his Holiness should be sent, he enclosed the following letter to Pius VI, in Antonelli's care:

*Most Holy Father:*

When two months ago I informed the Most Eminent Cardinal Antonelli of my arrival in Europe to receive Episcopal consecration, I asked him kindly to place me at your Holiness's feet, and in my name to profess especially that, although I undertook this burden of the Episcopacy with great fear, yet it afforded me no little consolation that I was not deemed by you, Most Holy Father, utterly unworthy of so great an office; in the next place, that he would lay before you my faith that I would never, at any time, fail in obedience and docility to the Holy See, without which, as I had learned from Ecclesiastical History and the doctrine of the Fathers, faith and morals waver. Let me add, moreover, that I shall spare no endeavor that all committed to my care, whether people or pastors, may be actuated by the same feelings that animate me towards the Holy See.

To obtain this grace more surely, prostrate humbly at the feet of your Holiness, I ask you to vouchsafe to confer on us the Apostolical benediction.

*Most Holy Father,*

*Your most obedient servant and son,*

✠ JOHN, Bishop of Baltimore.<sup>26</sup>

During his stay in London, Bishop Carroll carried on an extensive correspondence with the leading Catholic laymen of England, bringing to their attention the needs of his diocese,

<sup>25</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scritture originali*, vol. 893, not folioed.

<sup>26</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scritture riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, f. 404. "*Beatissime Pater*, Cum duobus abhinc mensibus Eminentissimum Cardinalem Antonellum de adventu meo in Europam, ut consecrationem episcopalem susceperem, certiorer facerem, simul rogavi, ut me ad Sanctitatis Tue pedes sistere dignaretur, meoque nomine profiteretur, imprimis me, quamvis hoc onus episcopale magna formidine suscipiam, tamen non parum consolationis inde derivare, quod a te, Beatissime Pater, non plane tanto munere indignus habitus fuerim; deinde, ut meam Tibi fidem exhiberet, nullo inquam tempore defuturum me illi observantiae et obsequio versus Sanctam Sedem, sine quibus et ex historia ecclesiastica et ex P. P. doctrina didici fidem moresque vacillare. Liceat mihi adicere ulterius, nulli unquam conatui me defuturum, ut eodem, ac ego ipse animo erga Sanctam Sedem sint affecti, qui meae curae committuntur, tam populus, quam pastores. Ad hanc gratiam certius consequendam, provolutus humillime ad pedes Tue Sanctitatis, rogo, ut nobis Apostolicam benedictionem conferre dignetur. Ut Sanctitatem Tuam Deus diu incolumem esse velit, suaeque Ecclesiae utilitati conservet, cum omni devotione et ex animo precatur Beatissime Pater, servus ac filius obsequentissimus, †Joannes, *Episcopus Baltimorensis*. Londini, die 27 Septembris, 1790." (Cf. SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 366-367, for translation given.)

and in particular, those of the new College of Georgetown. Father Plowden (September 25, 1790) regretted Carroll's determination to sail for Baltimore in the early part of October, since a longer stay would have been agreeable to his many friends, and might have added considerably to the donations being sent to the bishop for Georgetown.<sup>27</sup> Mr. Weld, Lord Petre, Lord Arundell of Wardour, and others wrote urging him to remain longer in England, but Bishop Carroll knew that the situation in Baltimore, Philadelphia and Boston needed his presence. On October 3, 1790, he wrote to Archbishop Troy, announcing his approaching departure:

... Since my arrival I have carefully avoided taking any part in the present controversy amongst the Catholics, though I have been urged on all sides. If I had seen any prospect of bringing the principals on each side of the question to a good understanding with each other, most certainly I would have attended much more than I have done to the cause in controversy, and probably should have formed a very decided opinion. At present I can only say, that the oath, in its present form, appears to me inadmissible; that it implies a renunciation of the pastoral powers of the successor of St. Peter; and that its obvious meaning is different from that which the advocates for the oath affix to it. This I have not said to a soul excepting now to your Lordship, and even to you I deliver this opinion, not as one which is founded on much investigation, but as one which forced itself on my mind when I read the oath. My baggage has been on board some days; the wind keeps the ship in the river, which I hope to leave very shortly. I was greatly obliged to their Lordships (of your province) who offered me their congratulations through your Lordship. May God pour his blessings plentifully on your and their arduous labours for the extension of the faith! I shall always esteem it a happiness and honour to hear from you. Cardinal Antonelli, in a late letter, recommended me to let your recommendation accompany all priests who go from Ireland to America. In consequence I referred to your Lordship for such recommendation, a Mr. Phelan, a Capuchin friar and postulant for our Mission."<sup>28</sup>

To Lord Arundell of Wardour, he wrote on October 4, 1790:

*My good and dear Lord:*

Your Lordship will be surprised to find my letter dated from London: for several days our ship has been prevented by contrary winds from falling down the river; and I wished to defer to the last giving your

<sup>27</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 6-M12.

<sup>28</sup> MORAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 508-509; cf. *Researches*, vol. xiii, pp. 161-162.

Lords'p an answer to yr most kind, affectionate, tho' you must allow me to add, too partial letter from Southampton. I own, that I was greatly affected by it; and could not read it through at once. The pleasure of being so much esteemed by Lord & Lady Arundell was corrected by the confusion, which I felt in knowing, how little I deserved it. I never spent a day at Wardour in my life, which did not fill me with respect for the noble family there: but the last days of my late visit made on me deeper impressions than ever. To add to these, your Lordship condescends to request, that you may be allowed to correspond with me: Indeed, my Lord, I shall ever esteem it an honour & a happiness. Letters directed to me at Baltimore, Maryland, left with Mr. Strickland, Mr. Talbot, or Mr. Joshua Johnson, Merch't in London, will go safe.

A little before I received your Ldsp's last Mons'r Nagot, Superior of the Seminary of St. Sulpice, came over hither, in consequence of a previous correspondence between the Nuncio at Paris & me. The object of his voyage was, to concert measures for the erection of an Episcopal Seminary for the Diocese of Baltimore. We arranged all preliminaries; and I expect at Baltimore, early in the Summer, some of the Gentlemen of that institution to get hand to work; & I have reason to believe they will find means to carry their plan into effect. Thus we shall be provided with a house fit for the reception and further improvement in the higher sciences of the young men, whom God may call to an Ecclesiastical state, after their classical education is finished in our Georgetown academy. While I cannot but thank divine providence for opening on us such a prospect, I feel great sorrow in the reflection, that we owe such a benefit to the distressed state of Religion in France.

Relative to the appointment of Bishops here, I can only say to your Lords'p that the opposition, which was intended in the North to be made agst Bishop Gibson, will subside. A remonstrance was to have been signed by the Clergy: but Bishop Talbot having recommended compliance & submission, the remonstrance is withdrawn. So says a letter to Mr. Wm. Meynell, just returned from Palermo: to whom I have presumed to recommend to see Wardour, as he is under a promise of going to see Mr. Ch's Plowden. Your Lords'p will find in him a person well informed generally, & particularly in the fine arts. I cannot presume to answer your Lords'ps confidential appeal to my judgment, concerning the oath. When I see men of abilities & virtue engaged on both sides, I dare not venture to direct in a matter of so much consequence without studying the question much more, than I have had time to do. At present I will only recommend to your Lordsh'p to consult one, or at most two men, of whose judgment, in all other matters respecting your spiritual concerns, you have found most reason to rely; and to follow their opinions. But this need not make me so far reserved, as to withhold from your Lds'p that at present and as far as I have considered the subject, my opinion is against the oath: However an opinion formed, as mine has been, deserves little regard.

I promised to write to Lady Arundell before I leave England: now I

propose doing so from Gravesend. Yr Lordship knows my sentiments in her regard, & will, I hope, be the interpreter of them: and I request to have my humble respects made to Mes'rs Forrester & Nihell. The Dr. Booth is here: by him, I will send some impressions of the large seal: the small one shall be on this letter. I ought to answer Mr. Nihell's letter, full of kindness & goodness, like himself; but really I have not time. I hope he will excuse me. I depend much on his & Mr. Forrester's prayers; who, I hope, has had advices from Mons'r Picard—Let Mr. Nihell know that Mrs. Paines vinegar would come too late—I am not less obliged to her for the trouble she has taken. Dr. Madison, the new Prot't Bishop of Virg'a, is my fellow passenger.

I have the hon'r to be with the greatest resp't, My Lord,

*Yr. Lords'ps Most obliged & humble s't,*

J. CARROLL.<sup>29</sup>

On October 8th, he embarked at Gravesend in the same vessel which had carried him to England. A stormy and disagreeable passage of two months followed and he reached Baltimore on December 7, 1790. It is not difficult to imagine the thoughts that occupied his mind during the voyage home, or the plans which he must have made, and probably traced on paper during that time. The problems which faced him were not insurmountable, for he succeeded during the twenty-five years of his episcopate in meeting them all in turn and mastering them. Foremost among these was the lack of educational facilities for the young and of a preparatory seminary for the priesthood. But he came back with the promise that the Sulpicians of Paris would soon be on their way to Baltimore, and with that promise the future did indeed present a rosier hue than it had since his appointment as prefect-apostolic in 1784. There was also the outstanding difficulty that the "newcomers" into the American vineyard were, with few exceptions, mediocre men, priests, as he said in several of his letters to Plowden, who joined "much ignorance to consummate assurance." They were mostly subjects of bishops who rejoiced to see them go, and they brought, and unfortunately kept, not only their habits of long standing, but their own views on the methods which ought to be pursued in organizing the nascent Church. "You cannot conceive the trouble I suffer already," he had written to Plowden on October 23, 1789, "and still greater which I foresee, from the medley of clerical charac-

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<sup>29</sup> *Stonyhurst Transcripts.*

ters coming from different quarters and various educations, and seeking employment here.”<sup>30</sup> The boldness of some of these priests before his departure in July, 1790, in flaunting his authority had created difficulties which would require several years to settle; and with priests contumacious of his jurisdiction, it is easy to realize the added difficulty he had in controlling the laity in accordance with fundamental ecclesiastical law. The antagonism created by the disturbers between the old clergy and the new was heightened by the thorny question of property rights in the missions, and his declaration of non-interference did not help to adjust matters peaceably and definitively. Bishop Carroll was at this time a man of fifty-six, and in the full enjoyment of his intellectual powers. He had not sought the exalted post given to him by the Holy See, but he was a man whose determination was that born of humility and of dependence upon God and upon prayer; and how well he met the problems which faced him on the morrow of December 7, 1790, is his enduring title to fame in American Catholic annals.

An escort of priests and people gathered at the landing in Baltimore, when the ship carrying their bishop arrived on Tuesday, December 7, 1790. Bishop Carroll was escorted to his home, the little rectory attached to St. Peter's Church, where he was to spend the remaining twenty-five years of his life. The following Sunday the church was thronged with Catholics and non-Catholics, few of whom had ever seen a Catholic bishop before. Bishop Carroll took possession of his pro-Cathedral in liturgical fashion that morning. Five priests, with the trustees of the church, met him at the door, and then escorted him to the altar, where the *Te Deum* was chanted. He was then conducted to the throne erected on the Gospel side, and pontifical Mass was begun. At the end of the Mass, he imparted his episcopal benediction and announced the usual indulgences granted on such solemn occasions. His sermon, dealing mainly with the duties and the responsibilities of his office, shows how profoundly he appreciated the immense scope of the work before him:

In this, my new station, if my life be not one continued instruction and example of virtue to the people committed to my charge, it will

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<sup>30</sup> Quoted by HUGHES, *l.c.*, p. 688.



become, in the sight of God, a life not only useless, but even pernicious. It is no longer enough for me to be inoffensive in my conduct and regular in my manners. God now imposes a severer duty upon me. I shall incur the guilt of violating my pastoral office, if all my endeavours be not directed to bring your lives and all your actions to a conformity with the laws of God; to exhort, to conjure, to reprove, to enter into all your sentiments; to feel all your infirmities; to be all things to all, that I may gain all to Christ; to be superior to human respect; to have nothing in view but God and your salvation; to sacrifice to these health, peace, reputation, and even life itself; to hate sin, and yet love the sinner; to repress the turbulent; to encourage the timid; to watch over the conduct of even the ministers of religion; to be patient and meek; to embrace all kinds of persons; these are now my duties—extensive, pressing, and indispensable duties; these are the duties of all my brethren in the episcopacy, and surely important enough to fill us with terror. But there are others still more burdensome to be borne by me, in this particular portion of Christ's church which is committed to my charge, and where everything is to be raised, as it were, from its foundation; to establish ecclesiastical discipline; to devise means for the religious education of Catholic youth—that precious portion of pastoral solicitude; to provide an establishment for training up ministers for the sanctuary and the services of religion, that we may no longer depend on foreign and uncertain coadjutors; not to leave unassisted any of the faithful who are scattered through this immense continent; to preserve their faith untainted amidst the contagion of error surrounding them on all sides; to preserve in their hearts a warm charity and forbearance toward every other denomination of Christians, and at the same time to preserve them from that fatal and prevailing indifference which views all religions as equally acceptable to God and salutary to men. Ah! when I consider these additional duties, my heart sinks almost under the impression of terror which comes upon it. In God alone can I find any consolation. He knows by what steps I have been conducted to this important station, and how much I have always dreaded it. He will not abandon me unless I first draw down His malediction by my unfaithfulness to my charge. Pray, dear brethren, pray incessantly, that I may not incur so dreadful a punishment. Alas! the punishment would fall on you as well as on myself; my unfaithfulness would rebound on you and deprive you of some of the means of salvation.<sup>31</sup>

In summary, his task embraced certain definite needs: the religious education of Catholic youth; seminary training for the priesthood; the immediate wants of the laity; the supply of the

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<sup>31</sup> SHEA, *op. cit.*, pp. 371-372; original draft in *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Letter-Book, vol. i. Cf. White's appendix to DARRAS, *History of the Catholic Church*, vol. iv, pp. 615-618. New York, 1865.

clergy; the preservation of the faith; the inculcation of charity and forbearance, in fine, of the spirit of religious tolerance among his flock; and the safeguarding of his people from heresy and religious indifference.

His first biographer, Brent, relates that after remaining a few days in Baltimore, he hastened to his mother's residence at Rock Creek, "to testify towards her those sentiments of love and veneration which characterized so strongly his intercourse with her, and to renew those kindly and genial relations with the rest of his family and surrounding friends, which rendered him so dear and acceptable to them all."<sup>32</sup>

The newly-created Diocese of Baltimore, over which he now presided, was coterminous with the new Republic. Practically speaking, it extended over the whole of the eastern part of the present United States, with the exception of East and West Florida, which remained Spanish territory until its seizure in 1810-13, and its final purchase in 1819. The population was unevenly distributed in this large territory. A small section, that extending in a narrow strip from Baltimore to Boston, contained over 45 per cent. of the population to the square mile. Surrounding this, westward to the Alleghanies, there was 6 to 45 per cent. of the inhabitants to the square mile; and beyond that natural barrier out to the Mississippi, with the exception of a cluster of settlements in Kentucky, the percentage of population was less than 6 per cent. to the square mile. Emigration westward had begun shortly after the Revolutionary War, and in 1790, a stream of settlers had reached the Ohio Valley beyond Pittsburgh. Outside the thirteen original States, the only organized portion of the country was the Northwest Territory, established in 1787.<sup>33</sup> Shea tells us that Bishop Carroll had as fellow labourers in this vast vineyard about thirty-five priests; and he gives us the following places as possessing churches at the time: Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York City, Boston, Charleston, St. Inigoes, Newtown, Newport, Port Tobacco, Rock Creek, Annapolis, Whitmarsh, Bohemia, Tuckahoe, Deer Creek, Fred-

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<sup>32</sup> *Biographical Sketch, etc.*, p. 122.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. SEMPLE, *American History and Its Geographic Conditions*, p. 65; DUNBAR, *History of Travel in America*, vol. i, p. 152. Indianapolis, 1915.

erick, Hagerstown and some minor stations or chapels in other parts of Maryland; Lancaster, Conewago, Goshenhoppen, Elizabethtown, York, Reading, Carlisle, Greensburg, in Pennsylvania; Coffee Run, in Delaware; Vincennes, Kaskaskia, Cahokia, Prairie du Rocher, in the Mississippi Valley. There were other churches in the Middle West, at Detroit, Raisin River, Michilimackinac, and Fort Miami, but these were still claimed by the Bishop of Quebec, being in territory not yet entirely relinquished by the English. In the old French and Spanish lands there were two churches, one at Natchez, and the other at Villa Gayoso, under the Bishop of Havana. Besides these permanent settlements and cities, there were Catholics scattered wherever the pioneers had gone. Travel and communication were alike difficult and cumbersome, and the great distances separating the settlements rendered it difficult for the Catholics to make their presence known to the priests or to Bishop Carroll. A generous estimate of the number of Catholics in the United States at the time would be in round numbers 50,000. The first detailed Report on the State of Religion in the Diocese of Baltimore is that sent by Bishop Carroll on April 23, 1792, to the Cardinal-Prefect of Propaganda Fide.

Officially, Bishop Carroll's diocese was geographically identical with his prefecture; and the limits of this were determined in 1784 by the extent of territory at that time under the jurisdiction of the Vicar-Apostolic of the London District. The Brief, *Ex hac apostolicae*, did not enter into the question of diocesan limits, and, therefore, the old lines of the prefecture were unchanged. No juridic act of the Holy See had withdrawn the authority of the Bishop of Quebec from northern Maine, northern New York, or the Northwest Territory; and the Bishop of Santiago de Cuba still ruled the Natchez District in the south. Bishop Carroll referred this question to Propaganda, and on January 29, 1791, the Sacred Congregation placed the whole territory of the United States under the jurisdiction of Bishop Carroll. As the flag of the Republic advanced, therefore, in the northern and southern parts of the country, Bishop Carroll's authority followed by virtue of this indult.

Shortly after his arrival in Baltimore Bishop Carroll wrote to Lord Arundell to acquaint him with his safe journey across the Atlantic:

*Baltimore, 14 Dec. 1790.**My Lord:*

I know that your Lordship interests yourself so much in my regard, as not to be indifferent to the prosperous issue of my late voyage across the Atlantic. I have the pleasure to inform you, that I arrived safely on the 7th of Dec'er, having embarked at Gravesend October 8th. We had a blowing & disagreeable passage; but a good ship carried us safely through all difficulties. I hope your Lordship & your incomparable Lady are well convinced, that no distance of place or time can efface those impressions of esteem, respect &, allow me to say, of affectionate friendship, with which your virtues, kindness, & condescension have inspired me. God grant, this may find you both, as well as Mrs. Arundell & Clifford, with their respective husbands, in perfect health—Be pleased to present my respectful Compliments to Mes'es Booth and Forrester & Nihell; and to inform the first, that I have conducted his niece thus far in perfect health; that her B'r Charles is arrived to convey her to his house; that she presents her duty respectfully to him. And to Mr. Forrester you will be pleased to say, that I retain the greatest sense of his kindness, & shall be glad to know the answers, he received from Mr. Picard. Mr. Forrester has so many good qualities to recommend him to esteem, & to discover his usefulness, that I am almost ashamed to mention one, which, in our present circumstances, would be particularly conducing to the solemnity & propriety of divine worship; his knowledge of the rites and ceremonies of the church—I request the favour of your Lordship to present my respects to Lady Arundell, & the other branches of your noble & amiable family. I have not yet seen my Sister, whom her Ladyship honoured with a mark of her regard, & therefore can not be the interpreter of her sentiments—

I have the honour to be with the greatest respect,

My Lord

*Yr. Lordships most devoted & obed't S't.*

✠ J. CARROLL.<sup>34</sup>

Bishop Hubert of Quebec, his nearest episcopal neighbor, wrote on December 5, 1791, to congratulate the new Ordinary of the United States:

*My Lord:*

I take advantage of a moment's leisure that the affairs of this diocese allow me to send you my tardy but very sincere congratulations upon your promotion to the See of Baltimore. God has made use of you, My Lord, to give birth to a new Church, to establish a second diocese in North America, which, I trust, will in the future form a considerable portion of the kingdom of Jesus Christ on earth. Surely you have not

<sup>34</sup> *Stonyhurst Transcripts.*

attained this preferment without many trials and merits; I pray divine Providence with all of my heart to recompense you therefor, and I thank him for having procured for my diocese the precious advantage of having a Catholic diocese in its neighborhood.

They have written to me from Paris that you intend to establish a seminary in your episcopal city, and that Mr. Nagot, a priest from the Seminary of St. Sulpice, had in consequence gone there with a dozen young ecclesiastics. You could not, my Lord, build a more solid foundation for the preservation and growth of the true faith in this country. The individual merit of this director, the reputation of the house to which he belongs, are so many arguments which prove that God, in calling you to the episcopate, has given you the wisdom and administrative ability necessary to fulfil its requirements. May He long preserve a life which must be infinitely dear to the glory of His name and to the spiritual welfare of your diocesans.

In my last letter to Mr. Hody, Superior of the Foreign Missions at Paris, I promised to give him good news of your success in founding a seminary. Be so good, My Lord, I pray you, as to make it possible for me to keep my word to him.

The letter with which you honored me on May 5, 1788, reached me in due time, and you ought in like manner to have received my reply dated October 6th of the same year.

I have the honour to be with perfect esteem and sincere veneration, &c.

✠ JEAN FRANÇOIS,  
Bishop of Quebec.<sup>85</sup>

Bishop Carroll's reply makes mention of the outstanding difficulty between the two dioceses—Quebec and Baltimore, each of which was coterminous with a nation, namely, the boundaries separating the jurisdiction of Bishop Hubert and himself:

*Baltimore, January 20, 1792.*

*My Lord:*

I received with emotion and veneration the felicitations your Lordship did me the honour to offer me upon the creation of the new see of Baltimore. May this diocese become what you prophesy, a means for the increase of the true faith in the vast country embraced by my diocese, and may it be sustained always by episcopal virtues like unto yours, my Lord, and by a clergy as edifying as that of Canada! On my part, I shall ever make it my duty to maintain with the see of Quebec not only a communion of faith and a fraternal union of charity, but to entertain towards your Lordship, a respectful confidence, and to give proofs thereof by communicating to you all my ideas and projects for preserving and extending

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<sup>85</sup> *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, Case 9A-A12; printed in the *Records*, vol. xviii, pp. 159-160, from a copy in the *Archiepiscopal Archives of Quebec*.



the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Looking upon you as my senior in the episcopate, and my model, I shall strive to conform my conduct to the principles which animate yours.

It is true, and I cannot be grateful enough to God for it, that the worthy Mr. Nagot, in consequence of arrangements made whilst I was in Europe, is here in Baltimore at the head of a seminary with four other priests, and with six young ecclesiastics, of whom four are English or American. They have secured a suitable house, and all the exercises are carried out therein.

Besides the seminary, we have opened a school, or Catholic college, fifteen miles from here, for the instruction in letters and piety of Catholic youth. I hope that from this college Providence may draw many scholars to the service of the Church and that it will become a nursery for the seminary. I shall then have, if I be yet living, or my successors will have, the means of giving to our flock as pastors only priests trained under our eyes, and who can be relied upon with moral certainty.

This, my Lord, is what you can write to Mr. Hody. He did me the honor to write to me some time ago and I intend to reply forthwith.

I do not know if they have written you from Rome their decision touching the boundaries of our respective dioceses. They have placed under my jurisdiction the entire territory of the United States. Apparently they have thought, and probably with reason, that our government would have taken umbrage at seeing you exercise spiritual authority within its domain. I am expecting from France in the spring several ecclesiastics well suited to service in the Illinois and at Post Vincennes.

You will oblige me very much if you will give me a reliable and exact list of the properties owned by your church or your seminary in the United States. These properties still belong to you, according to our laws, if you have not dispossessed yourself of them by any act on your part. Last year Mr. Gibeault [*Gibault*] and other individuals, by means of a statement that I believe to be quite false, obtained the grant of several ecclesiastical properties located at Kaskaskias and at Post Vincennes. I am taking measures to invalidate this grant, but I am greatly handicapped by lack of assured knowledge in regard to these properties. I look to you, my Lord, for information which may perhaps serve to frustrate evil and to benefit both our dioceses.

I have the honour to be, in union with you in the Holy Sacrifice, and with profound respect, your Lordship's humble and obedient servant.

✠ J., Bishop of Baltimore.<sup>86</sup>

Cardinal Antonelli had given Bishop Carroll the keynote for his administration of the Church in the new Republic—*utatur jure suo!* It was Rome's old-time answer to difficulties similar

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<sup>86</sup> *Archiepiscopal Archives of Quebec, États-Unis, Miscellaneous*, printed in the *Records*, vol. xviii, pp. 160-162.

in character to those which surrounded America's first Catholic bishop. Occasions were to arise during the remainder of Carroll's life (1790-1815) when only stern and swift action on his part saved the American Church from permanent disorder. A few problems he was obliged to leave his successors to solve; but he never avoided the heavy obligations of his post and he never allowed the least encroachment upon his episcopal authority to go unchallenged. The history of his episcopate is the subject of the next volume.

## CHAPTER XXII

### TWO REMARKABLE PROJECTS

(1790)

Independent at last of all ties with the Old World, except the one bond which has ever been jealously guarded—spiritual union with the Holy See—the Catholic Church of the United States inaugurated its organized life with an American as its chief shepherd. With all the pulsating energy that distinguished American spirit in those early days of constitutional government, it was inevitable that every institution in the land would be subjected to a minute scrutiny by those who had risked all that the nation might be established. No one who knew John Carroll could say aught else of America's first Catholic bishop than that he was among the most striking figures of the times. He had all the kindliness of the American. He had all the American's eagerness to assist those in difficulties, yet to refrain from entering problems that were not vital to American progress. He knew no master except those whom God had placed above him. He realized that the future greatness of the Church of God in the United States lay in teaching her children that the needs and the aspirations of the nation were all in consonance with Catholic doctrines and Catholic principles. It was not, to use a much-abused phrase of a later archbishop, that John Carroll had determined to make the Church in America throb with American life, because at that time the full content of the American ideal had not been probed; but one fact was clear to his mind and that fact was the grave responsibility which rested upon him of safeguarding the Church in the Republic from all "foreign entanglements," and particularly from the intrusion of all unauthorized influence during this critical period of its actual beginning. That he succeeded is now a matter of historical knowledge; and it will ever be said to his high honour among the

prelates of the past that he handed on to his successors an ecclesiastical establishment which saw America with American eyes and spoke of America in terms understood by the American people.

We have already been made familiar with the story of foreign interference in American Catholic affairs on the morrow of the American Revolution. The Church here was never to be entirely freed from this fear. The unrest caused by this intrusion was of two kinds—that having its origin in European capitals, and that fomented by little groups of priests and laity within the United States, who had failed to leave their allegiance to foreign institutions behind them. Bishop Carroll realized that there was only one way of keeping intact the flock entrusted to him and that was to prevent any division of his authority, except through the legitimate channel at Rome.

The two projects which are chronicled here were the first organized efforts to encroach upon his authority and jurisdiction, independently of his own wishes.

The first of these is one of the most tragic of all the colonizing attempts on American territory. Some few months after the issuance of the Bull *Ex hac apostolicae* which created the See of Baltimore and gave to John Carroll jurisdiction over all the Catholics in the new Republic, a project was inaugurated in Paris for the purpose of sending out a body of French colonists to Ohio. The Ordinance of 1787 had hardly been put in operation before land speculation began to appear. Under the leadership of the Rev. Manasseh Cutler, of Ipswich, Massachusetts, the Ohio Company with a capital stock of a million dollars was organized, and Congress agreed to sell 1,500,000 acres of land to the speculators. At the same time under the name of the Scioto Company, the Ohio Company took an option on an additional 3,000,000 to 3,500,000 acres adjacent to the original grant. It was only when the bargain was closed that Congress learned it had been dealing with two companies.<sup>1</sup> Colonel William Duer, then Secretary of the U. S. Board of Treasury, who was the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *American State Papers*, vol. i, p. 29, *Public Lands*, Washington, 1834. "Nothing was talked of in every social circle, but the paradise that was opened for Frenchmen in the western wilderness; the free and happy life to be led on the blissful banks of the Scioto," Howe, *Historical Collections of Ohio*, p. 178. Cincinnati, 1847.

head of the Scioto Company, sent Joel Barlow to Paris to sell lots in the tract controlled by his company. Barlow's first attempts in Paris met with little success, until a distinctly French company—La Compagnie du Scioto—was organized and purchased 3,000,000 acres in the Scioto tract at \$1.20 an acre. In January, 1790, La Compagnie du Scioto was dissolved and the "Company of the 24" bought out its rights. The leading spirit of this last Company was d'Esprémesnil, and it was not long before he had sold a large number of tracts to prospective French immigrants.<sup>2</sup> "They were mostly of the better sort of the middle class, carvers and gilders to his majesty, coach and peruke makers, friseurs and other artists as little fitted for a backwoods life."<sup>3</sup> Before the first group of colonists was ready to leave Havre on May 26, 1790, letters had been passed between d'Esprémesnil and the other promoters and the Papal Nuncio in Paris regarding the spiritual care and guidance of the new colony, asking for the appointment of a Father Duboisnantier as bishop of the new colony:

A son Excellence, Monseigneur le Nonce,

La nouvelle colonie des François qui se forme dans l'Amérique septentrionale, entre le Scioto et l'Oyo, étant presque toute composée de catholiques qui désirent vivre et mourir dans la profession intérieure et extérieure de leur foy, considérant à quels dangers ils seroient exposés pour le salut, s'ils se trouvoient sans église, sans prêtres, sans culte public, sans hiérarchie, et abandonnés à quelques ecclésiastiques mercenaires que les malheurs qui déchirent la France pourroient conduire au milieu d'eux par l'espoir d'y faire fortune, supplie humblement notre très saint père le pape, de leur accorder un évêque qui préside au maintien de la doctrine et de la discipline religieuse, et qui, toujours uni par principes à la sainte église romaine, puisse réprimer les abus qui se pourroient glisser dans ce nouvel établissement, soit contre la foy soit contre les mœurs. La nouvelle colonie désire cette grâce avec autant plus d'ardeur qu'occupant un terrain de plus de deux cent lieux d'étendue, il n'y a pas d'évêque à qui on puisse commodément avoir recours soit pour des ordinations, soit pour la Confirmation,

<sup>2</sup> The tragic story of the Gallipolis Colony has been told with sympathy and charm by the Rev. Lawrence Kenny, S.J., in the *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. iv, pp. 415-451. An excellent bibliography will be found at the end of his article, which is especially valuable because he has used the *Gallipolis Papers*, in the Van Wormer Library, at the University of Cincinnati. Some of the ecclesiastical documents on the Colony were published by the present writer in the *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. ii, pp. 195-204. The best detailed account of the Colony is that by BELOTE, *The Scioto Speculation and the French Settlement at Gallipolis*. Cincinnati, 1907.

<sup>3</sup> LAMOTT, *History of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati*, p. 15. Cincinnati, 1921.



soit pour des dispenses que les évêques seuls sont dans l'usage d'accorder, et que d'ailleurs elle espère que la fondation d'une ville épiscopale [Gallipolis] attireroit dans son sein un nombre prodigieux de familles dispersées dans ce pays presque inculte, et qui y vivroient en corps de société comme en unité de croyance.

A ces causes, les principaux Membres de la colonie proposent Monsieur Duboisnantier, prêtre habitué à s. Rock, et supplient très respectueusement sa sainteté de lui donner le titre d'Evêque, avec toute la juridiction spirituelle que peut demander une mission aussi étendue que celle du Scioto.

[Signed]

Guérin	MM. Barons de Maubranche, Malartic
de Lézay-Marnesia	du Bellan
Delaroche	Smith
du Val d'Esprêmesnil	Madame Thiébaut
William Playfair	de Gravier
J. A. Chais, de Soissons	de Bellon <sup>4</sup>

There is no record, among the papers of d'Esprêmesnil, of the attempt to promote Father Duboisnantier to the episcopal See of Gallipolis in the wilderness of Ohio. Shea is correct in his surmise that Duboisnantier was proposed prior to Didier. This supposition is strengthened by some Bruté papers.<sup>5</sup> He did not come to America.

More than a thousand colonists were to go out to the Scioto lands before the year was over, and a Benedictine monk of St. Maur, Dom Didier, whose brother had purchased land from the company, was approached by d'Esprêmesnil, who urged the Benedictine to apply to the Papal Nuncio for episcopal jurisdiction. On March 22, 1790, the leaders of the project wrote to Dugnani, the Papal Nuncio, asking for Didier's appointment:

<sup>4</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scrittura riferita, America Centrale*, vol. ii, ff. 388-389.

<sup>5</sup> "A curious fact.—The late Bishop Bruté, among some papers of his which have come under our notice, states that a Catholic bishopric was proposed to be erected at Scioto, or Gallipolis, in Ohio, as early as the year 1789, which was the period also of Rev. Mr. Carroll's appointment to the new See at Baltimore. Mr. Bruté being at Paris in 1824, learned this remarkable fact from the Abbé Boisanter, a canon of St. Denys, who had been himself nominated to the See in Ohio. No reasons, however, are mentioned, to account for the subsequent withdrawal of these appointments. It was probably caused by the circumstances mentioned in Dr. Spalding's *Sketches of Kentucky* (p. 62), where he speaks of the French Catholics who had settled at Gallipolis. The colonists had been defrauded in the purchase of lands, the title proving defective, and many of them returned to France in consequence of this unfortunate transaction, which marred the prospects of the new settlement, and probably suspended the proceedings relative to the contemplated See. It is rather singular, however, that the fact of the new bishopric having been designed, has never been publicly alluded to in connection with the history of the West." (*United States Catholic Magazine*, 1845, p. 407.)

A son Excellence, Monseigneur Dugnani, Nonce Apostolique,

Les personnes réunies pour former une colonie dans l'Amérique Septentrionale, sur les bords de la Rivière Scioto, désirant que ce nouvel établissement qui s'y forme puisse jouir de tous les secours spirituels qui dirigent et assurent la soumission à l'église catholique apostolique et romaine, après les informations nécessaires pour un choix si important ont nommé le Père Dom Didier Bénédictin de la congrégation de St. Maur pour présider tout ce qui serait relatif au culte divin et aux instructions de la Jeunesse. Les ci-dites personnes, aujourd'hui assemblées, ayant pris connaissance du *Mémoire* présenté par Dom Didier à son Excellence, Monseigneur le Nonce ont l'honneur de supplier son Excellence de vouloir bien protéger auprès de sa Sainteté les observations qui sont présentées dans cette requête. La colonie sera très flattée d'obtenir par la Protection de son Excellence des secours spirituels, qui pourront contribuer au succès d'un établissement dont tous les principes ont pour objet la gloire de la religion, la pureté des mœurs, et le bonheur de la colonie, et ont signé le present ce 22 Mars, 1790.

[Signed]

Baron de Maubranche  
de Lézy-Marnesia, *fils*  
M. de Lézy-Marnesia  
Malartic  
de Bondy  
pour mon frère, Didier.

Gravier  
du Val d'Esprêmesnil  
Vte. de Bellon  
J. A. Chais, de Soissons  
De Graville  
*etc., etc.*<sup>6</sup>

The fact that some of these names appear on both letters would seem to indicate that there had been no rivalry between Duboisnantier and Didier. Probably the first-named, on reflection, declined the empty honour. There is no insincerity in the declaration of their intention to establish a well-organized Catholic life at Gallipolis. Frenchmen of all classes were anxious to leave France to escape "l'intolérable tyrannie des vizirs françois," as De Warville calls the Revolutionists, when they saw the ancient bulwarks of Christianity falling in ruins around them.<sup>7</sup> The *Mémoire*, mentioned in this supplication for Didier's election, gives a general survey of their spiritual plans. The Didier *Mémoire* bears the same date as the preceding letter, March 22, 1790. The number of the emigrants, who were mostly Catholic, he says, was increasing to a considerable extent; and, since he had been chosen as their spiritual head in the New

<sup>6</sup> *Propaganda Archives, America Centrale*, vol. ii, ff. 379-379v.

<sup>7</sup> BRISSOT DE WARVILLE, *Nouveau Voyage dans les États-Unis de l'Amérique septentrionale, fait en 1788*, vol. i, p. 377. Paris, 1791.

World, he felt obliged to strengthen the request of the leaders by making a personal application for ecclesiastical powers—either as Bishop of Gallipolis or as vicar-apostolic—to carry out the religious and educational plans of the colonists. It is apparent from the *Mémoire* that the Nuncio had already called his attention to the fact that the United States had just been given a Bishop in the person of John Carroll of Baltimore; but Didier argues that the distance between Baltimore and Gallipolis was so great that Bishop Carroll could not guide the spiritual destinies of the emigrants. The French people, moreover, were accustomed to have their own bishops, and Didier begged the Nuncio to hasten the conclusion of the matter at Rome, as he was then ready to start for Havre:

*Monseigneur,*

J'ai l'honneur de représenter à Votre Excellence qu'une société de personnes distinguées et Catholiques, a fait des réquisitions considérables au Scioto, partie de l'Amérique septentrionale, qu'elle y fait passer plusieurs habitans des campagnes, que plusieurs particuliers suivent cet exemple, que ces émigrations s'élèvent déjà à un degré de population assez considérable pour mériter l'attention religieuse du très saint Père et celle de Votre Excellence. Ils ont droit d'attendre du chef visible de l'église les secours spirituels qui lui seul a la pouvoir de leur procurer. Cette société, Monseigneur, m'a fait l'honneur de me choisir pour son pasteur. Ce choix m'honore, excite mon zèle et me détermine à sacrifier ma personne et mes foibles talens à la Religion, à l'Education, et au bonheur de cette colonie naissante. Mais, Monseigneur, il ne m'est pas possible de remplir ce but, si je n'ai point une mission légale. Votre Excellence sait que l'Etat dans lequel se va fonder cette colonie ayant pour Religion dominante la protestante, et tolérant toutes les sectes, il n'existe aucune puissance ecclésiastique à la quelle je puisse avoir recours. Votre Excellence m'a fait l'honneur de me faire observer qu'il existe un évêque à Baltimore. Qu'il me soit permis de lui représenter qu'on peut regarder cet évêque comme nul pour le Scioto, à raison des distances considérables qui nous sépareront; la difficulté des communications, le danger d'abandonner un troupeau que l'on pourra regarder comme une église naissante; tous ces obstacles pourroient, Monseigneur, retarder les fruits que la religion pourroit faire en ce pays, et même détruire insensiblement dans le cœur des habitans les principes religieux qu'ils ont reçu dans leur enfance, par les difficultés qu'ils éprouveroient dans l'exercice, la facilité qu'ils pourroient rencontrer à professer une autre Religion qu'on leur persuaderoit être aussi bonne. Votre Excellence connoit le cœur de l'homme. Elle sait qu'il faut se prêter à l'opinion, aux usages et aux habitudes, lorsque l'on vent opérer le bien. Il faut donc qu'elle ait le bonté de considérer la nature des

hommes qui vont habiter ces nouvelles régions, ce sont des François Catholiques, accoutumés à être soumis pour le spirituel à des Evêques et à des Prêtres. Je pense, Monseigneur, qu'il seroit dangereux de leur laisser perdre ces avantageuses impressions. Il faut aussi que Votre Excellence envisage le nombre considérable des Emigrants, qui vont former tout d'un coup une masse d'habitans assez forte, pour avoir besoin d'un chef revêtu de pouvoirs spirituels très étendus. Que ce soit un Evêque ou un Vicaire Apostolique, il faut l'un ou l'autre, c'est au très saint Père et à Votre Excellence à juger ce qui conviendra le mieux. Je n'ai point, Monseigneur, assez de présomption, pour solliciter en ma faveur. Ces titres qu'exigent des talens supérieurs et des vertus que je n'ose flatter d'avoir, un zèle ardent, une religion solide et éclairée, quelques connaissances—d'utilité publique, un cœur compatissant auquel rien ne répugne, lorsqu'il s'agit de soulager l'humanité souffrante, sont des titres pour prétendre au rang de subalterne. Il faut des qualités plus éminentes lorsqu'on est destiné à être placé sur le chandelier, c'est ce qui fait que mes vues ne se portent point à ce degré d'élévation. Le but de ma supplique, Monseigneur, est de vous faire envisager le besoin d'un évêque, ou de tout autre Supérieur ecclésiastique, auquel je puisse m'adresser pour les pouvoirs relatifs à l'emploi auquel je suis destiné par le choix d'une société, la nécessité de sa résidence au Scioto, tant pour le présent que pour l'avenir; résidence à laquelle j'attache le succès de l'établissement de la Religion dans ces contrées et sa propagation future dans cette partie du Globe. Si ces réflexions, Monseigneur, ne sont point assez déterminantes, pour faire en ce moment l'établissement que j'ai l'honneur de proposer à Votre Excellence, je la supplie de vouloir bien employer ses bons offices auprès de sa Sainteté pour m'obtenir avant mon départ tout ce qu'elle jugera nécessaire pour le plus grand bien de la religion, la gloire de Dieu et le bonheur des peuples qui me sont confiés. Je me contenterai des pouvoirs qui me seront accordés, dans la forme et l'étendue qu'il aura plu à la sagesse et à la providence du très Saint Père de les circonscrire, et je les accepterai avec la reconnaissance et la soumission la plus entière. Je supplie Votre Excellence de vouloir bien presser au Cour de Rome l'expédition prompte de l'objet de ma demande, attendu la proximité de mon départ. Permettez que Votre Excellence trouve ici l'hommage respectueux de mon sincère devouement et les sentimens distingués avec lesquels j'ai l'honneur d'être,

*Monseigneur,  
Votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur*

FR. DIDIER.<sup>8</sup>

The same day, on receipt of this *Mémoire*, the Nuncio sent a despatch to Rome, dated March 22, 1790, to Cardinal Antonelli,

<sup>8</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scrittura riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, ff. 380-383.



announcing the project of the Scioto Company and the selection of Dom Didier as Bishop of Gallipolis, Ohio.<sup>9</sup> The Nuncio averred that Didier was unknown to him, but that he would inquire as to his character and talents for the post. He asked Didier for a more complete explanation of the plans of the company, promising that when these were presented to him, he would send them to Rome. On March 29, 1790, the Nuncio wrote a second time to Cardinal Antonelli, saying that three or four priests were preparing to go to Gallipolis, with Didier as the spiritual head of the colony.<sup>10</sup> Propaganda yielded to the wishes of the Scioto Company and on April 26, 1790, appointed Didier not bishop or vicar-apostolic, as he wished, but vicar-

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<sup>9</sup> "Eminenza, Una colonia francese di varie centinaia di persone va a stabilirsi nell'America settentrionale. Ha questa fatto l'acquisto di una quantità di terreno sul bordo dell'Ohio a cento leghe di distanza dal mare. Fra le persone, che sono alla testa di questa colonia vi è il Signor d'Espremeniil Consigliere del Parlamento di Parigi, e soggetto ben noto il quale credo abbia formato un piano di costituzione a governo di questa piccola repubblica. Uno dei primi loro oggetti è stato di provvedere a tutto ciò che può esser necessario per l'esercizio del culto nostra santa religione per l'istruzione e per l'educazione. Hanno quindi prescelto un certo D. Didier monaco di S. Maur, che io non conosco, ma di cui mi procurerò qualche informazione. Questo religioso mi ha fatto presentare l'annesso foglio, in cui espone la commissione, di cui deve essere incaricato, e domanda alla Sacra Congregazione le necessarie facoltà. Io però gli ho fatto rispondere che oltre il suddetto foglio sarebbe stato opportuno che li deputati di questa colonia facessero conoscere alla Sacra Congregazione le loro idee, e li mezzi che si offrono a fornire per l'esecuzione, onde la Sacra Congregazione possa acquistare una sufficiente cognizione di questo nuovo stabilimento, e dare quelle providenze che la natura del luogo, il numero della persone ed altre circostanze fisiche e morali potranno esigere per il miglior successo. Questa memoria adunque mi sarà mandata nel corrente di questa settimana, che io poi in seguito accompagnerò con lettere d'ufficio all'Eminenza Vostra. Ho creduto soltanto di prevenire Vostra Eminenza, stante che essendo imminente la partenza del suddetto religioso, mi si fa premura di qualche risposta. Parigi, il 22 Marzo, 1790." *Propaganda Archives, I. c., ff. 381-382.*

<sup>10</sup> "Eminimo, e Revmo. Signore, Alcune famiglie francesi sono in procinto di partire per l'America Settentrionale. Hanno quivi comparte delle terre sulla riva del fiume Scioto, alla distanza però di 100 leghe dal mare, ed hanno il progetto di stabilire in esse una colonia. Fra i loro primi pensieri hanno avuto quello di provvedersi de' ministri della religione. Ci sono tre o quattro ecclesiastici disposti a partire in breve. Ma oltre a questi, vi è un Religioso della Cong. di S. Mauro, il quale specialmente vien deputato da questa colonia per essere alla testa di tutto ciò che riguarda il culto, l'amministrazione de'sacramenti, l'istruzione, ed anche l'educazione. Questo religioso pertanto mi ha formato un foglio, che qui annetto unitamente all'altro sottoscritto dai capi della stessa colonia. Da tali fogli V.E. e la Congregazione vedranno quanto il suddetto religioso desidera, e quanto gli può esser necessario per contribuire al buon esito dello stabilimento in ciò che riguarda la religione, e i costumi. E con profondissimo ossequio sono, dell' E.V. umilissimo, divotissimo, obbligatissimo servitore A. Arcivescovo di Rodi. Parigi, 29 Marzo, 1790." *Propaganda Archives, I. c., f. 378.*



general *in spiritualibus* for the space of seven years, on condition that such jurisdiction should not conflict with that of Dr. Carroll. A copy of this Brief exists in the Catholic Archives at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, and the following translation was published in the *Researches* of the American Catholic Historical Society:

26th April, 1790.

Whereas, it has been communicated by the Most Rev. Archbishop of Rhodes, in France, that some men of illustrious piety and distinguished family have formed the design of emigrating to North America and establishing a colony on the lands of the river Scioto, where they have already, to this issue, bought considerable land; and whereas, for the sake of Catholic worship to which they are and will be most attached, they have arranged to bring with them a priest who may, as well on the way as in the settlements where they will fix their homes, administer to them the Sacraments, undertake the preaching of the word of God, look after the care of souls, they humbly ask of the Holy Father to grant to Rev. Father Didier, Benedictine Monk of the Order of Saint Benedict, Congregation of St. Maur, all the faculties which may seem opportune for the spiritual government of so many Catholic families: the Sacred Congregation, through the most eminent Cardinal Antonelli, Prefect, agreeing to their petitions, decreed, if it should please the Holy Father, that the faculties of *Formula IV* could be conceded to Father Didier, if he should be approved for pastoral work by the Archbishop of Paris, or his Vicar-General in spiritualities, for seven years, with complete jurisdiction over all the French who emigrate with him, *on condition that the lands and place where they should found their Colony should not be within the diocese of any Bishop within the limits of the government and sway of the United States, which altogether lies under the jurisdiction of the Bishop lately appointed in Baltimore by the Apostolic See.* Further, Father Didier can in no way use the above faculties unless by the consent of the said Bishop, and is bound every year to inform the Sacred Congregation of the state of his mission, the number of faithful and their spiritual progress.

Which decree being communicated to him by the Most Eminent Cardinal Prefect, at an audience given on the above date, His Holiness graciously approved in every particular, and conceded the said faculties *ad septennium*.

L. CARDINAL ANTONELLI, *Prefect*.

*Dated Rome, April 28, 1790.*

Decree of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, twenty-sixth of April, 1790.

Through Most Eminent Cardinal Antonelli, Prefect, the Sacred Con-

gregation appointed Rev. Father Didier, Benedictine of the Congregation of St. Maur, Superior of the French Colony on the banks of the river Scioto, for seven years, with the authority necessary for the spiritual government of the said Colony, according to the prescription of the decrees of the Sacred Congregation, and with the limits placed as to their exercise, and at no other time and in no other way.

L. CARDINAL ANTONELLI, *Prefect*.<sup>11</sup>

*Dated Rome, April 28, 1790.*

It is evident from this original Brief of appointment that Didier's powers as ecclesiastical leader of the colony were in no way to interfere with the jurisdiction enjoyed by Bishop Carroll in the United States. The territory beyond the Alleghanies was an obscurely-known one; and in 1790 it was not altogether certain whose was the ecclesiastical jurisdiction over this part of the Ohio Valley. But the Brief reads with a definiteness which leaves no room for doubt that the Sacred Congregation had no intention of reducing the diocesan limits of Bishop Carroll nor of giving Didier any faculties which could be used without Carroll's express consent. In his letter of May 10, 1790, to Cardinal Antonelli, the Papal Nuncio of Paris also understood that Didier's faculties would have to be confirmed by Bishop Carroll before they could be used. About Didier himself he could find little, but he was informed that he was a religious of good character, sound in doctrine, though somewhat of an impetuous and idealistic nature. Didier had already left for Havre at the date of the Nuncio's writing (May 10, 1790), and was preparing to sail about the end of the month for America. Bishop Carroll, in a letter to Plowden, dated London, September 3, 1791, speaks of "the arrival, last year, of a Benedictine Monk, with a congregation, on the banks of the Ohio."<sup>12</sup> Propaganda intended, therefore, that the new colony would depend almost immediately upon the Bishop of Baltimore.

Antonelli was well informed by this time of American church affairs and his solution of the spiritual needs of the Scioto Colony was a just one. Everything depended upon the question whether

<sup>11</sup> Vol. xii, pp. 50-51.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. HUGHES, *op. cit.*, Documents, vol. i, part ii, p. 745. New York, 1910. Carroll mentions the fact that the Sulpician Father Galais, during the discussions preparatory to the foundation of St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, suggested that the Seminary should be founded at Gallipolis, where many emigrants from France at that time proposed to settle. (Cf. SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 377.)

the United States laid claim to the territory occupied by the Scioto Company. If so, then Didier was to depend directly upon Bishop Carroll for the right to exercise sacerdotal faculties. It appears that d'Esprémesnil was dissatisfied with Didier's humble acceptance of the faculties granted to him, and, after the monk's departure, he seems to have renewed his efforts, for he urged the appointment of the Abbé Duboisnantier to the See of Gallipolis, as the town to be founded on the Ohio was called. The Nuncio related this to Antonelli in his letter of May 17, 1790.<sup>13</sup> No action seems to have been taken on this letter. An interesting episode connected with this Ohio project is the fact that the Sulpicians of Paris had been carefully studying the scheme, and had almost decided to accompany the colonists, when they were advised by the Nuncio to consult Bishop Carroll, who was then in London. They were persuaded to go to Baltimore instead.

Antonelli lost no time in informing Bishop Carroll of the Gallipolis colony. He wrote on May 22, 1790, announcing the departure of the first colonists.<sup>14</sup> This letter Carroll probably did not receive, having left for London in July, so that the first news he had of the French colony came to him in London. Among the first ships that set out from Havre, one sprang a leak and when it looked as though all on board would be lost, an English ship came to its assistance and courageously saved all the passengers. In Antonelli's letter of August 14, 1790, he says: "The new colony of Frenchmen which has started out for the banks of the Scioto must have reached your country by

<sup>13</sup> "Emo, etc., Essendo D. Didier già partito da Parigi, non ho potuto eseguire che per lettera le commissioni di cui V.E. mi ha onorato. Non so se il mio piego arriverà in tempo di raggiungerlo a Havre de Grace, ove da vari giorni era egli sul momento d'imbarcarsi, ma quand'anche fosse partito, Mr. d'Espremenil mi ha fatto sapere, che potrà facilmente spedirglielo essendo imminente la partenza d'altre navi mercantili per la medma destinazione. Qui in Parigi vi è un Prete, che bramerebbe di divenir vescovo di quella colonia, ed a ottenuto, che i capi di essa s'interessino per la sua elezione. Mr. d'Espremenil mi ha quindi presentato il foglio, che annetto. Per quanto credo che la cosa non convenga in alcun modo sì per le disposizioni, che si annunziano nel soggetto, sì per le misure già prese circa la dipendenza della colonia dal vescovo di Baltimore, e la facoltà recentemente accordata a F. Didier, non ha potuto ricusare di mandarle il sudo foglio. Se V.E. crede mi basterà d'avere una lettera ostensibile per Mr. d'Espremenil il quale non lascia di essere un soggetto, che merita de riguardi, e delle attenzioni. E con profondmo ossequio, dell' E.V., etc. Parigi, 17, Maggio, 1790." *Propaganda Archives*, l. c., ff. 387-387v.

<sup>14</sup> This letter is missing in the *Propaganda Archives* and in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives*, but it is mentioned in Antonelli's letter of August 14, 1790.

this time. We wrote to Your Lordship on May 22, that they would be guided in spiritual things by Dom Didier, a monk of St. Maur, to whom faculties have been given by the Holy See, with the clause, however, that if the colony settle within the confines of the Diocese of Baltimore, Father Didier will be bound to obtain your consent to the exercise of his faculties."<sup>15</sup> In his reply of September 27, 1790, Bishop Carroll says: "One group of the colonists who have left France arrived in America, after I had left; not that group, however, with which the priest of the Congregation of St. Maur has sailed, of whom there is mention in your letter. They have selected a city in a territory belonging to the United States, though not included in any of those provinces which I have described more fully to Father Thorpe, when I asked him to explain to Your Eminence my hesitancy in this matter. This can be more easily done when you see the map which I have despatched through the Nuncio of Paris."<sup>16</sup> Shea tells us that after reaching the settlement at Gallipolis, and after learning that he was within the jurisdiction of Bishop Carroll, Dom Didier travelled back to Baltimore to obtain the Bishop's consent to use his faculties. Father Didier remained with the colony, acting as vicar-general of Bishop Carroll until 1792, when he retired, discouraged by his unsuccessful efforts to keep the faith alive among his flock. On July 21, 1792, we find his name signed to the baptismal register of St. Charles Borromeo's Church, in St. Charles, Mo. Sometime later, he was at Florissant, and, in 1794, he took up his residence at St. Louis, where for five years he laboured, beloved of all the citizens of that city, until his death about the end of October, 1799.

Father Kenny's admirable sketch of the dispersal of the Gallipolis colony explains the dwindling of the settlement and the far-reaching consequences of the same:

Enticement to the other settlements drew many away; fear of the Indians, now on the war-path, was no idle fancy, and contributed to all the other motives for departure; but the cause usually ascribed for the general dissipation of the colony was that, even after they had paid a second time for their land, their titles were still insecure, in fact, invalid. It is interesting to see how they penetrated at once into the remotest part of America. Little knots of them appear on the map from the At-

<sup>15</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Lettere*, vol. 258, f. 497.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, *Scritture originali*, vol. 893, not folioed.



lantic seaboard to civilization's last outposts in the Trans-Mississippi, and from Detroit and Canada to and across the Mexican border.<sup>17</sup>

Cincinnati attracted some; Paris, in Bourbon County, Kentucky, attracted others. One group, led by Marnesia, went to Pennsylvania, and founded the settlement of Asylum.<sup>18</sup> Count Joseph de Barth, Baron of Walbach, settled in New Hampshire. One of his sons, Father de Barth, twice refused the See of Philadelphia; another, General Walbach, rendered distinguished service to the land of his father's adoption, in the War of 1812. New Bourbon in Missouri received another group of the colonists, and New Madrid proved a mecca for the disillusioned pioneers. Even far-away Maine is said to have harboured a group of the refugees from Gallipolis.<sup>19</sup> Of all the cities, St. Louis appears to have been the most popular refuge. Here they found Father Didier, their pastor, whose brother, John Baptist Didier, soon became one of the prominent citizens of the town. Only a remnant of the several thousand French colonists remained in the city of Gallipolis, which they had hoped to see created an episcopal See. In September, 1793, Fathers Badin and Barrières, whom Carroll had appointed his Vicars-General for the Ohio and Kentucky districts, visited Gallipolis, and remained three days, heartily welcomed by the deserted colony. High Mass was sung by them in the garrison and forty children were baptized. "The good French colonists were delighted, and shed tears on their departure."<sup>20</sup> Bishop Carroll writes the epitaph for this once enthusiastic dream-city:

<sup>17</sup> L.C., p. 437.

<sup>18</sup> HERBERMANN, *A French Emigré Colony in the United States*, in the United States Catholic Historical Society, *Records and Studies*, vol. i, pp. 77-97 (A translation of Henri Carré's article on the same subject in the *Revue de Paris*, May 15, 1898); GRIFFIN, *A Colony of French Catholics in Bradford County, Pennsylvania (1794-1800)* in the *Records*, vol. xviii, pp. 245-261, 421-433; Bishop Kenrick in the *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*, for January, 1834. For a description of the sad condition of this settlement, where four priests who resided there never said Mass nor gathered the people for prayer or services, cf. SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 292. Griffin gives another version in the *Records*, vol. xviii, pp. 426-429, but the absence of any documents in the *Baltimore Cathedral Archives* strongly favors Shea's opinion. The apostate Abbé Fromentin was one of these four priests. Cf. INGHAM, *Asylum*. Towanda, 1916. The only one of the four priests who remained was the Apostle of Georgia, Abbé Carles. (*Works*, of Bishop England, vol. iii, pp. 252-254.)

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Queries on Catholic Maine History*, in the *Maine Catholic Historical Magazine*, vol. v, pp. 44-46.

<sup>20</sup> SPALDING, *Sketches of the Early Catholic Missionaries of Kentucky*, pp. 61-62.



You have inquired, Most Eminent Cardinal, about the French who came two years ago, to inhabit the banks of the Scioto, and who brought with them as their pastor a Benedictine monk of St. Denis, Dom Didier. When they had arrived at their destination, great difficulties and quarrels arose in the colony, on account of a diversity of opinion regarding the movements in France. Hence a large number left for other places; those who remained, reduced to a very small number, built a village, cut down the trees, planted the fields, and were about to profit by the fruit of their labour, when an Indian uprising took place, and they were in sore straits again. I do not know what they decided to do. This past summer, Dom Didier, their parish priest came here, and from him I obtained practically all that I related about the colony. I have learned hardly anything about these colonists which could satisfy either the interest of the Sacred Congregation or its solicitude regarding those things which pertain to piety and religion. Many of them are refugees from Paris who have brought with them the vices of the large cities, and a hatred for religion. It is to be hoped that Dom Didier will be able to apply a remedy to this evil and to encourage labour and simplicity of morals.<sup>21</sup>

The tragic end of this great colonizing project is described in a letter from Father Badin to Bishop Carroll, June 28, 1796, in which he says that eighty men, without religion or morals, were all that were left in Gallipolis; in 1805, as Dilhet tells us, they had dwindled to twenty.<sup>22</sup>

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Louisville, 1844. Cf. SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 455. It would look from this as if Didier had deserted his people. BRECKENRIDGE in his *Recollections* says "they had vanished like the palace of Aladdin." Cf. for the whole melancholy tragedy, VOLNEY, vol. ii, pp. 381-393. "Night was coming on when I reached the village of Gallipolis. I could only distinguish three rows of little white houses built on the flat summit of the bank of the Ohio. . . . I was struck with its wild appearance, and the sallow complexions, thin visages, sickly looks, and weary air, of all its inhabitants. They were not desirous of conversing with me" (p. 385, *English trans.*). There is a letter in ROBIN, *Nouveaux Voyages* (p. 17), from Dom Didier (undated but written after his arrival at Gallipolis) to Father Piot, sub-Prior of the Royal Abbey of St. Maur, to which Didier belonged. It must have been written during the first days of the colony, for it breathes great hope for the future. He says in part: "J'ai rencontré beaucoup d'Américains catholiques. J'ai baptisé beaucoup de leurs enfants; ils ne voyent de Presbytres que quatre fois par an. J'ai vu des Sauvages catholiques, parlant un peu Français, qui m'ont baisé les mains. . . ." It is strange that no letters of Didier's exist in the *Gallipolis Papers*, now in the Van Wormer Library (Ohio Philosophical Society), of the University of Cincinnati. These papers have been arranged and some of them edited by Belote, in the seventh volume of the *Quarterly Publications of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio* (vol. vii, 1907, no. 2). Other documents exist in the collection of the *American Antiquarian Society* and in those of the *New York Historical Society*. See also, BADIN, *Origine et Progrès de la Mission du Kentucky*, p. 16. Paris, 1821.

<sup>21</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scrittura originali*, vol. 893.

<sup>22</sup> DILHET-BROWNE, *The Beginnings of the Church in America*, p. 62. Quebec, 1922.

The failure of the whole scheme is but another incident in the already long list of utopian projects which have had their stage in America from the earliest colonial days.

Father Kenny writes :

Nowhere in all the annals of the American colonies is there offered a sharper contrast of light and shade, in fact or in symbol than here, where old nobles and counts with their gentle ladies, right out of the most brilliant court the world has ever known, are translated, as if by some evil magic, to the uncouth haunts of savage men and beasts. There are not indeed any thieves or murderers among them, if one except the Count Malartic, a professional warrior. No doors need locks. There are to be no deeds of violence. Lawsuits and quarrels, yes; these people are not all saints. One may find among them a specimen of that most odious degeneracy, the ex-priest, Fromentin, one day to become a member of the United States Senate representing the State of Louisiana.<sup>23</sup> The yellow fever will sweep him and his paramour in one day before the court that has a right to judge. There, too, is Von Schrilitz and his reputed wife, who will leave an illegitimate progeny to carry his shame down the ages. These bring out by contrast the worth and purity of their surroundings. To the Americans, the greatest wonder in the colony is Monsieur Duthiel, a farmer who always insists on giving too much of his wheat in every barter lest he might get the better of any of his neighbors. Death itself will stand in awe of Jean Baptiste Bertrand, who even in the days of famine will observe all the fasts of the Church, and by blandishments and by corporal punishments alike will see to it that even his grown offspring remain true to their faith. He will survive all the other men of Gallipolis, reaching the age of ninety-four in 1855. Standing winsomely beneath the arches of the wide wilderness, one might hear the sweet Mademoiselle Vimont humming the strains of sacred anthems she used to sing in the grand old Notre Dame of Paris; here is an Evangeline for the poets. Little boys and girls of tenderest years, playing in the bushes, meet at times the glaring eyes of Shawnees or of the wild cats; here are babes in the woods for the painters. What is needed, what we do not find, is an individual, a man towering above all the rest; there is no hero, where all are brave. They stood together and time has levelled down their graves to a common surface. But what with good and bad, civilized and savage, wise and frivolous, age and infancy, English and French, the romancer has materials for a story that, by keeping close to the truth, will one day resurrect the old French city and make it the term of pilgrimages for their descendants scattered

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<sup>23</sup> See a letter from Andrew Jackson, to President Monroe, Pensacola, August 4, 1821, in the *Records*, vol. xviii, pp. 429-431, for the base life led by Fromentin.

today from end to end of America like leaves that are blown by the blasts of October.<sup>24</sup>

Simultaneously with the Gallipolis bishopric occurred another of somewhat more ambitious design, namely, the creation of a separate diocese for the Indians of New York State. "The consecration and installation of Bishop Carroll," writes Shea, "were coeval with a strange project to erect an episcopal See in the State of New York. While the Church was slowly gaining a permanent footing in the cities of that State, there was an attempt to establish a French mission, and, strangest of all, a Bishop among the Oneida Indians, which forms one of the curious episodes in our history."<sup>25</sup> The object of those who engineered the scheme was no less than the foundation of an Indian Primacy over the Six Nations of New York State. The Oneida tribe constituted itself the spokesman for the rest of the Nations, and the plan was fully developed before the appeal was made to Rome. The Oneidas were a tribe of the Iroquois Confederacy, occupying the land about Oneida Lake, in Oneida County. They consisted of three clans—the Wolf, the Turtle, and the Bear, and each clan was represented, in the signatures to the documents, by three members. The Six Nations mentioned in the documents were the Oneidas, Onandagas, Mohawks, Senecas, Cayugas, and Tuscaroras.<sup>26</sup> They were friendly towards the missionaries, and some of the noblest pages of early missionary effort are those containing the story of the Jesuits among these tribes. The *Jesuit Relations* contain many important documents describing the work done among the Oneidas by the Society of Jesus. The early missionaries speak of the Oneidas as the most civilized of the nations—a claim they make for themselves in their letter to Pope Pius VI. "They are

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<sup>24</sup> KENNY, in the *Catholic Historical Review*, pp. 435-436. Rev. Victor O'Daniel, O.P., in his scholarly *Life of Bishop Fenwick* (Washington, D. C., 1921) has brought to light new material for the study of the Gallipolis Colony (cf. pp. 73, 189-190, 194, 212).

<sup>25</sup> *Op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 373. All the documents available in the *Propaganda Archives* on the Oneida project are published in the *Catholic Historical Review*, vol. iii, pp. 78-79.

<sup>26</sup> Usually these tribes are spoken of as the Five Nations. The Tuscaroras were a southern tribe, and are supposed to have joined the Five Nations about 1714. After this date the Confederacy is called the Six Nations. Cf. DRAKE, *The Book of the Indians of North America*, v. i, p. 2. Boston, 1834.

demons when they are attacked," wrote one of the Jesuits in 1653, "but the gentlest and most affable people in the world, when they are treated as friends."<sup>27</sup> Shea's account of the origin of this extraordinary project is taken mostly from Hough's *Notices of Peter Penet*.<sup>28</sup> Though Penet's name is not mentioned in any of the documents at our disposal, it is probably true that the project originated with him. Penet was a native of France and had come to the United States in December, 1775, for the purpose of negotiating a supply of arms and ammunition for the Continental soldiers. He succeeded in impressing General Washington, who appointed him an aide-de-camp in the American army; but the supply never materialized. In 1783, he was trading as a merchant in Philadelphia, and had gained considerable influence with the Oneidas, whom he persuaded into the belief that he was an ambassador from the King of France. Shea says that he induced the tribe to apply to the French Minister of New York, Count de Moustier, in 1787, for a priest, and from a letter in Hough's *Notices*, it would appear that the priest in question, Father Perrot, was brought by Penet to the Indians.<sup>29</sup> Father Perrot took up residence among them at Oneida Castle (1789) and remained a year. His stay among the Indians might have been lost sight of completely, had his presence not been bitterly opposed by the well-known Calvinist clergyman, Rev. Samuel Kirkland, who attacked him severely in his letters.<sup>30</sup> Father Perrot is not mentioned in any of the documents dealing with the project; in fact there is no mention of any priest in Penet's *Plan of Government*, which appeared in the *Albany Gazette*, in February, 1789.<sup>31</sup> Whether there is any connection between the project of Penet and the effort of the agent, Jean de la Mahotière, the documents do not state; but if we are to accept the statements of Kirkland and those related about the

<sup>27</sup> *Jesuit Relations*, vol. xl, p. 91.

<sup>28</sup> FRANKLIN B. HOUGH, *Notices of Peter Penet and his Operations among the Oneida Indians, including a Plan prepared by him for the Government of that Tribe*. Louisville, N. Y., 1866. Cf. SHEA, *History of the Catholic Church in the United States*, vol. ii, p. 373 ff.

<sup>29</sup> SHEA, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 373. Cf. *Researches*, vol. xxiv, p. 27.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. LATHROP, *Life of Samuel Kirkland, Missionary to the Indians*, p. 293. Boston, 1847. (SPARKS, *American Biography*, vol. xxv.) TRACY, *Notices of Men and Events Connected with the Early History of Oneida County*, p. 200. New York, 1882.

<sup>31</sup> The Penet Plan will be found in HOUGH, *op. cit.*, pp. 24ff.

"Lost Dauphin," the Rev. Eleazar Williams, who was a missionary among the Oneidas,<sup>32</sup> it is strange to find a body so thoroughly Presbyterian, as these missionaries describe the Oneidas, writing that they were entirely Catholic, that they had obtained the departure of the Anglican and Presbyterian ministers in April, 1789, and that they had made arrangements to have two priests from Canada take charge of divine worship until the arrival of the six Capuchins who were to accompany Mahotière back to New York from France.<sup>33</sup>

The first of the four documents on the Oneida Bishopric is a *Supplicatio* in Latin to Pius VI, dated April 25, 1789. It was probably written at Oneida Castle, and is signed by the representatives of the Wolves, the Turtles, and the Bears. The letter begins with the general statement that the highest good of man here below is to possess the true Faith and that no one can come to the knowledge of the Faith except through the Roman Catholic Church, whose head, the Supreme Pontiff, is the Vicar of Christ on earth. Communion with the Church was the earnest desire of the Oneidas; and, although they were undeservedly regarded by Europeans as savages, nevertheless they possessed a culture of their own, which was far greater than was generally known. They ardently wished to be numbered among the children of the Church. In a general council of their Nation, their leaders, warriors, wise men, women and children, had decided to send an appeal to the Holy Father, asking him to provide them with a bishop, who would be at the same time Primate of the Six Nations. For this post they had chosen Father John Louis Victor Le Tonnelier de Coulonges, whom they had adopted as one of their own, and who was in every way worthy of this exalted dignity. A certain Nicholas Jourdain, an adopted Frenchman, whose Indian name was Shakerad, interpreted the *Supplicatio* to the chiefs, who then signed it and placed it in the hands of their agent, Jean de la Mahotière. Mahotière came to Paris and presented the *Supplicatio* to the Papal Nuncio, together with a letter to Pius VI explaining the necessity for the bishopric:

<sup>32</sup> Cf. BLOOMFIELD, *The Oneidas*, pp. 98ff. New York, 1907.

<sup>33</sup> "Il a obtenu de la nation des Oneida le renvoi des ministres anglicans et presbytériens comme n'ajans plus parmi elle ni troupes, ce qui a été exécuté le mois d'avril 1789."



*Pro uno oneideae  
nationis Episcopo  
et sex nationum  
Primate*

*Supplicatio oneideae nationis  
indicae ad Vestram Sanctitatem  
Pium VI. Summum Ecclesiae  
Pontificem. Romae.*

Sanctissime Pater

Istam [?] habere veram religionem primum est hominis bonum, sicut fides est primum bonum supernaturale: donum coeleste ad quod nemo pervenire potest nisi per aditum ad Ecclesiam Catholicam, apostolicam romanam, cujus gubernacula tenet ejus visibile Caput Summus Romanus Pontifex, Christi in terris Vicarius! Hujus vestrae sanctae Communionis gratiam ferventer appetunt, sanctissime pater, homines illi quos tam immerito europaei dixerunt agrestes ac feros; ii quippe in societates grandes, seu nationes, antiquitatis primas numeroque stupendas congregati, immensis americani continentis terris dominantur et imperant quae ab americanis finibus ad australia et occidentalia usque maria patent, easque hominibus liberis, familiis, villis, vicis atque pagis cum omnium inter omnes communitate summaque in parentes et seniores pietate frequentant.

Ardentissimo praesentim in fidem christianam studio flagrant, sanctissime pater, nationis illius indicae populi qui oneidaci dicti, gallicè *les Oneida*, proximi sunt septentrionales Americanarum ditionum fines numeranturque et sunt prima e quinque illis celeberrimis nationibus, coeterarum omnium debellatoribus, vulgo dictis *nationes quinque*; populi oneidaci statuta mente se ad officia civilia rite informandi, jam ratum habuerunt unum gubernationis modum aequè numeris omnibus absolutum ac sibi plene accomodatam, illud suae vitae, civilis grande consilium inniti voluerunt ac statuerunt firmo religionis christianae fundamento, quo ad felicem exitum properante, coeterae nationes indicae mox eandem gubernationis formam in suam adoptaturae, eorum quoque bono exemplo simul ac verbi divini ministerio una pariter, uti firma proximaque spes est, convertentur ad religionem catholicam apostolicam romanam.

In quorum gratiam, pro propugnatione fidei et nostrarum salute animarum, nos supremi duces consilii, duces belli, bellatores, senes, mulieres et liberi totius oneideae nationis et nobis affinium nationum, sanctitati vestrae, supplicavimus et supplicamus providere, constituere, et confirmare Episcopum nostrae oneideae nationis et Primate quinque nationum dilectum optimeque de nobis meritum Joannem Ludovicum Victorem Le Tonnelier de Coulonges, equitem, origine gallum, unum vero e nobis nostra nationali adoptione, virum religione, moribus, bonis consiliis et exemplis maxime commendandum, jam selectum, nominatum et assumptum a nobis ad illas sacras functiones, illumque augere rogamus in hac prospera apud nos religionis facie quibuscumque juribus, dignitate et praestantia in ordine ad conversionem nostrorum fratrum indorum, ad propagationem et conservationem fidei in nostris imperiis, et Deus totius auctor salutis vestram sanctitatem vestrumque pontificatum suis optimis cumulabit donis.

Datum in pleno oneideae nationis Concilio sub signo nostrorum supre-

morum ducum magnoque sigillo nostrae nationis, anno reparatae salutis millesimo septingentesimo, octogesimo nono, et primo ab exercita nostra suprema postestate, die vero vigesima quinta aprilis.

<i>Tribus Lupi</i>	<i>Tribus Testudinis</i>	<i>Tribus Ursi</i>
Ajestalate	Shovonjhelego	Hagoyvownloga
Scanondoe	Anthony	Konwagelet
Hannah-Sodalh	Sagoyowntha	Agwilentengwas

(Interpretatum a nobis linguarum interprete apud sex famosas nationes indicas die et anno supradictis. De mandato supremi concilii. Nicholas Jourdain, indice Shakerad.)<sup>34</sup>

Mahotière's letter, dated over twelve months later (May 17, 1790), shows that the agent had taken it for granted that there would be no hesitancy on the part of the Holy See in granting the request of the Oneidas. A Company of Four—all Frenchmen—had been formed for the purpose of organizing the future prosperity of the Indians. A chapel had been erected, with pictures, bells, sacred vessels, ornaments, and other necessary decorations, at the Company's expense. Mahotière informed His Holiness that six Capuchins were to accompany him back to America:

*M. Jean de la Mahotière premier agent général de la Nation des Oneida sur les ordres qu'il a reçu de solliciter auprès de Votre Saintété les moiens de propager et de conserver la foi parmi les nations indiennes de l'Amérique septentrionale.*

A NOTRE TRÈS SAINT PÈRE LE PAPE PIE VI, A ROME

*Très Saint Père:*

J'ai l'honneur d'adresser à Votre Saintété par l'envoi de Monseigneur le Nonce résidant à Paris, les pièces ci-jointes, lesquelles la nation des Oneida en particulier et les six fameuses Indiennes en général m'ont chargé avec ordre d'exprimer à Votre Saintété, les progrès que fait la religion parmi ces nations, leur impatience d'obtenir du Saint Siège des pouvoirs pour leur évêque et primat, et surtout de mettre avec la plus grande force sous les yeux de Votre Saintété les moiens qui sont propres à conserver et à propager la foi dans un pays qui l'emporte sur toute l'Europe par son étendue et qui peut lui être assimilé pour le nombre des habitants, et de porter moi même à les nations les pouvoirs et la

<sup>34</sup> *Propaganda Archives, Scrittura riferite, America Centrale*, vol. ii, ff. 401-403. This and the following documents are left exactly as they appear in the photostat copies; no corrections of spelling, grammar, or accents have been made.

réponse dont il vous plaira, très Saint Père, me charger par l'entremise de Monseigneur Votre Nonce à Paris.

Le divin flambeau de la foi ne s'éteindra jamais sur la terre, et si en punition des méchans il cessoit d'éclairer une partie du monde, sa lumière vivifiante éclaireroit bientôt un autre hémisphère et prépareroit toujours des habitans pour le ciel: "O altitudo divinum sapientiae et scientiae Dei . . . quam incomprehensibilia sunt judicia et investigabiles viae ejus!"

Une compagnie de quatre français en opérant la civilisation des Indiens s'est proposée, très Saint Père, le bonheur de les nations et de leur posterité, de leur conversion à l'église romaine, leur alliance avec les puissances chrétiennes à l'effet obtenir des secours pour la conversion des Indiens et assurer à les mêmes puissances la jouissance paisible et la conservation de leur États et Colonies en Amérique, cette dernière considération est surtout de la plus grand importance pour les Florides, la Louisianne etc., et la Havanne, qui sont sous la puissance de la cour de Madrid.

Notre titre de français, par l'agréable ressouvenir qu'elles ont encore de l'honnetété et de la générosité des Français à leur égard lorsqu'ils étaient possesseurs de la belle province du Canada avant le traité de 1763, mais pour opérer leur conversion à la foi et à la vie civile, nous avons jugés absolument nécessaire de recourir aux bienfaits, nous leur avons faits construire une église, acheter des tableaux, des cloches, des vases sacrés, des ornemens, des livres d'église et toutes ses décorations, de notre argent; pour leur inspirer l'amour du travail et le gout de l'agriculture nous leur en avons donnés nous mêmes l'exemple et nous leur avons faits présents de chevaux, de boeufs, de charrues et de tous les utensiles de labour.

Tous les présens, très Saint Père, leur ont été très agréables, nous avons donnés beaucoup; mais M. le Tonnelier de Coulonges a employé à cette oeuvre pie plus des deux tiers de son patrimoine, cinq cens milles livres au moins, et cet homme vertueux, ce prélat à bonnes oeuvres est mis hors d'état de continuer ses charités pour en avoir trop suivi le sentiment religieux.

La nécessité d'employer les moiens di bienfaisance et de charité pour propager la foi dans le nouveau monde existe encore aujourd'hui, que dis-je, elle est plus instante que jamais par les progrès qu'y fait la religion, vous en faire, très Saint Père, le tableau frappant, est l'ordre que j'ai reçu des nations indiennes converties, c'est l'obligation que je me suis imposée par État, par amour pour la religion, et par un sentiment de profonde vénération pour Votre Saintété. C'est combler vos entrailles paternelles de joie pour la conversion d'une infinité d'ames à la foi et la conquete d'un pais immense à l'Eglise. C'est convaincre ces bonnes nations que Votre Saintété trouvera dans les tresors de sa charité des moiens effectifs de seconder près d'elles les opérations de la grace et la propagation de la foi. Et de continuer les secours que nous leur avons si loialement portés, ou par la voie de quetes et d'aumones annuelles faites parmi les chrétiens, ou par celle de bénéfices dont il plairot à Votre Saintété pourvoir ou

faire pourvoir leur évêque et primat, ou par celle de bienfaits accordés par votre entremise, très Saint Père, par la Cour d'Espagne et dont la proposition ne peut qu'être favorablement accueillie, sous le nom de secours accordés par Sa Majesté très catholique aux Indiens de l'Amérique septentrionale convertis, lesquels secours arriveroient tous les ans à Newyork par le paquet Espagnol, par le paquet français, ou de la Havanne, à l'adresse du consul d'Espagne ou de l'ambassadeur de France, pour être remis à M. le Tonnelier de Coulonges leur évêque et primat, et Dieu comblera le regne de Votre Sainteté de ses prosperités et de celles de l'Eglise les plus abondantes.

J'ai aussi ordre, très Saint Père, de supplier Votre sainteté d'accorder des pouvoirs de curés et de missionnaires apostoliques à six Capucins Français que je vais emmener dans trois mois chez les nations indiennes. Ce sont de tous les prêtres ceux qui y sont en plus grande vénération qui leur conviennent le mieux. Je finis, très Saint Père, en demandant votre sainte bénédiction, et vos saintes indulgences.

*Jean de la Mahotière premier agent général de la nation des Oneida et chargé des pouvoirs des six fameuses nations.*

*Paris. 17 Mai, 1790.<sup>35</sup>*

The Nuncio seems, at first, to have treated the project with scant attention, but the affair had reached the public press and had aroused a certain amount of sympathy and enthusiasm. Mahotière was then requested, as in the case of Dom Didier, for fuller explanations, and the Nuncio granted the Indian agent several interviews for the purpose of reaching a satisfactory explanation of the project. Mahotière impressed Dugnani as being a man of probity, but the Nuncio was very dubious about the whole plan. On August 2, 1790, the Nuncio wrote to Antonelli, enclosing the *Memoir* requested. After stating that he is sending the *Memoir* on the Oneida proposals, the Nuncio states that the appellants ask for the elevation of Father Tonnelier de Coulonges as bishop of the Indian see. Mahotière was a puzzle to Dugnani, but he seemed to him to be a man of good intentions though whether he was capable of all that he promised was not certain. The *Memoir* in question repeats the main propositions of the *Supplicatio*. There is no mention in the document of the newly-erected Diocese of Baltimore nor of Bishop Carroll, although St. Peter's Church, New York City, is spoken of, and the Spanish Consul at New York is given as the person to whom letters could safely be sent:

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, l.c., ff. 397-399.



*Suite des details interessans sur les nations indiennes de l'Amérique septentrionale et sur les six nations en particulier dont la première est celle des oneida*

*A Notre très Saint Père le Pape Pie VI, Chef de l'Eglise.  
à Rome*

*Très Saint Père*

Les Nations indiennes de l'Amérique septentrionale à qui cette partie de la terre est echue en partage par les decrets de la divine providence, sont très nombreuses et leur population beaucoup plus grande à mesure qu'elles sont plus enfoncées dans les terres et qu'elles ont moins de communication avec les européens. Ces indiens naturels du pais sont, très Saint Père, propriétaires et maîtres de cette immense partie du continent qui s'étend depuis les lignes des Etats Unis d'Amérique et celles du Canada jusqu'aux mers de l'ouest, du nord et du sudouest dont la seule partie connue a une étendue de soixante neuf mille vingt deux lieues carrées d'Angleterre et est par consequent plus grande que l'Allemagne, la flandre, la hollande et la suisse qui en total n'en contiennent que soixante neuf mille seize. Je dis la partie connue parcequ'on n'a pû encore y decouvrir aucune rivière, aucun fleuve qui eut son cours vers quelques points de l'ouest, ce qui prouve les états indiens dans cette partie ont encore une très grande étendue au delà des terres qui nous sont connues; de la suit naturellement, très Saint Père, une reflexion que vous pardonneriez à la force de notre zèle, qu'il importe infiniment à votre saintété et au bien de l'église que la foi soit prêchée à les nations qui sont bonnes parcequ'elles sont près de la nature et qu'elles se convertissent de proche en proche à la religion de Jesus Christ.

Les indiens, très Saint Père, ont divisé les terres en autant d'états differens qu'ils sont de nations, il les ont peuplés de familles et d'hommes libres, y ont élevés des hameaux, des villes et villages, et parmi eux la communauté de biens, les devoirs de la fraternité, le respect, l'obeissance aux parens et aux personnes plus âgées sont des lois également consacrées par l'usage et par les moeurs.

Chaque nation possède ses états en tous droits de souveraineté et les états indiens sont absolument differens et tout à fait étrangers à ceux de l'Amérique, connus sous le nom d'Etats Unis à ceux du Canada; nations souveraines, hommes libres, les indiens ne dependent en aucune manière ni du Congress ni du Roi d'Angleterre ni d'aucunes puissances avec qui ils traitent de souverain à souverain, toujours fideles à leurs traités, chacune des nations indiennes exerce ses guerriers, lève ses armées, fait la paix et la guerre, et combien il est affligeant, très Saint Père, de voir les Europeens, parce-qu'ils sont en proportion plus nombreux que les indiens situés de l'autre coté des lignes Amériquaines, exterminer les chefs, massacrer les familles indiennes, et envahir leur terres. Le gouvernement civil et religieux que nous leur avons donnés a pour objet, très Saint Père, un traité d'alliance, une confederation intime entre toutes les nations indiennes situées derrière les Etats Unis, depuis la nation des Oneida,



qui possède la moitié du fleuve Saint-Laurent et du lac Ontario jusqu'à celle des Creeks qui occupent les derrières de la Georgie et des Florides qui appartiennent à la Cour d'Espagne, de proposer à cette Cour l'adhésion à le traité qui ne peut lui être que très-agréable, puisqu'elle aura pour objet la conservation des états et des familles indiennes qui dans la lisière seule des Américains peuvent former un corps d'armée de cent mille hommes, qu'elle portera plus particulièrement encore sur la défense et la conservation des Etats Espagnols, les Florides, la Louisiane etc., dans le continent de l'Amérique et des îles y adjacentes qui sont menacées par les Américains et qu'elles ne sera de la part de la Cour d'Espagne qu'une extension de la protection ouverte et du traité qu'elle a déjà fait avec les deux nations indiennes dites les Creeks et les Chiroquois qui occupent les derrières des Florides, de la Georgie et des Carolines.

Les nations des Mohawks établis sur la rivière de ce nom, celle des Oneida souverains des terres à droit et à gauche du lac auquel ils ont donnés leurs nom, celle des Cayouga, des Caskanouray, des Onondaguay et des Senecas sont dites par excellence les Six Nations ou les Six Fameuses Nations, parcequ'elles ont vaincu pour la cause des Français leur alliés et amis toutes les nations indiennes connues. Elles sont situées entre le 300 et le 305 degré de longitude et le 42 et 46 degré de latitude du meridian de Paris et selon la manière de compter indienne, elles comprennent vingt quatre à vingt six mille familles.

La nation des Oneides située dans les environs du lac de ce nom, a, très Saint Père, sa ville principale au sudest dudit lac; elle est defendue par son heureuse situation et par un bon fort, et est marquée sur les cartes anglaises sous le nom d'*Oneida Castle*. C'est cette nation qui a reçu la première le germe de la civilisation par le gouvernement civil et religieux que nous lui avons donnés, son exemple a été suivi il y a un an par les cinq autres fameuses nations indiennes avec les secours spirituels et ceux temporels puissés dans les tresors de charité qu'il plaira à Votre Saintété de lui procurer.

Nous leur avons fait edifier une église dans la vilee d'Oneida, nous l'avons pourvue de vases sacrés, de cloches, de livres, et de toutes choses nécessaires au service divin; nous en avons fait une nation agricole en leur donnant avec de boeufs, des chevaux, des charrues et tous les utensiles, d'agriculture, l'exemple de cultiver nous-mêmes les terres, le bled, le mahis, les patates, le millet, le ris, le chanvre, le lin, etc.; et M. le Tonnelier de Coulonges, homme plein de mérite et de bonnes oeuvres, que la nation des Oneida et les chefs des Six Nations ont nommés Evêque des Oneida et Primat des Six Nations et présentés à Votre Saintété en cette qualité, a dépensé au moins les deux tiers de sa fortune dans les oeuvres de religion et de bienfaisance. Il a obtenu de la nation des Oneida le renvoi des ministres, anglicans et presbyteriens comme n'aisans plus parmi elle ni troupeaux, ce que a été executé le mois d'avril 1789, et a appelé auprès de lui deux pretres du Canada pour l'aider dans le gouvernement spirituel de cette nation, jusqu'à l'arrivée des six capucins, que nous lui conduirons dand trois mois, aussitôt qu'il aura plu à votre

saintété faire une response favorable à la nation nouvellement convertie et autres qui vont suivre son exemple.

Les pères capuchins français sont, très Saint Père, les prêtres qui conviennent le mieux aux indiens; ils les connaissent déjà et les aiment extrêmement; ils leur ont donnés le nom de *Longues robes*, et il seroit difficile de faire plus de plaisir à une communauté indienne que de lui procurer une longue robe; il est à souhaiter que Votre Saintété veuille revetir des caractères de curés et de missionaires apostoliques les six capucins qui vont passer avec nous dans les états indiens, et tous les autres qui ne tarderont pas à les suivre dans les travaux d'une aussi riche moisson.

Le Roi d'Espagne est déjà fondateur d'une église superbe, élevée depuis six ans à Newyork; il est bien digne de la religion de la monarchie de se faire aussi de quelque église à edifier chez les nations indiennes et de se declarer le bienfaiteur de ces peuples qui peuvent rendre de très grands services à la cour d'Espagne et qui ne marqueront pas de la faire à l'occasion. La voie du Consul d'Espagne à New York est la plus courte et la plus sure. Que Dieu inspirera à votre saintété les moiens les plus propres à effectuer et à obtenir la conversion de les nouveaux peuples par les bienfaits des fidèles.

*Tribe du loup*

Ajestalate

Hannah-Sodalh

Scanondoe

*Tribe de la Tortue*

Shovonjhelego

Sagoyowntha

Anthony

*Tribe de l'ours*

Hagoyvownloga

Konwagalet

Agwilentengwas <sup>36</sup>

On September 11, 1790, Cardinal Antonelli answered to the effect that the project had his sympathy, but that the main question at issue was whether these Indians were within the Diocese of Baltimore or that of Quebec. The Nuncio was asked to send the fullest possible information, and if it was evident that the Oneidas were not subject to either of these two bishops, the Cardinal-Prefect would gladly place the supplication before the Holy Father, who thanked God on the conversion of so many souls, and would gladly do everything necessary to assist them in organizing their Church.<sup>37</sup> Nothing further seems to have been done in the Oneida project, which has a prominent place in the Franco-American ecclesiastical schemes of the time. Father Le Tonnelier de Coulonges passes from our sight with

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, l.c., ff. 399-400.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, *Lettere*, vol. 258, f. 577: "Da quanto espone il suddetto agente sembra che tutti questi popoli sono pienamente liberi, nè possano punto appartenere nè agli Stati Uniti de America nè alla provincia del Canada, il che se non fosse dovrebbero nello spirituale dipendere o dal nuovo vescovo di Baltimora o da quello di Quebec le guiridizione de quali si estende per un tratto immenso di paese." Antonelli suspects that they may belong to Louisiana!

these documents. Whether he remained with the Oneidas or returned to France is not known. The good priest had expended at least two-thirds of his private fortune in works of benevolence and religion amongst his Indian flock. There is no doubt that Propaganda informed the Indian agent that all applications for the spiritual direction of the Six Nations should be made directly to Bishop Carroll. Two years later, the question was brought to Dr. Carroll's attention and a priest was sent to these tribes.

The march of events in France and especially in Paris blocked any further interest in a project thousands of miles away. The Civil Constitution of the Clergy was completed about this time (July, 1790) and the arbitrary methods employed by the National Assembly were fast disorganizing ecclesiastical life in France. The Oath of the Clergy to the Constitution, passed on November 27, 1790, was refused by forty-six thousand parish priests; and from that time until the close of the Reign of Terror, irreligion and violence were masters. The Church in the United States was to profit by the tyranny practised upon the priests and bishops of France; and although the Gallipolis and Oneida schemes for a French bishopric in the new Republic failed, in the period immediately following the episcopate of Carroll the six episcopal sees in the United States were ruled by French ecclesiastics who had fled from the chaotic upheaval of their own land during Carroll's time.<sup>38</sup>

Protection of the American Church was imperative at the time, since the world war of 1789-1815, then about to engulf all Europe, would undoubtedly send adventurous spirits, both ecclesiastic and lay, across the Atlantic. There was little danger to the homogeneity of the American Church from visionary schemes like those of Gallipolis and the Oneida Primacy; the real danger lay nearer, in the cities where the population was already growing.

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<sup>38</sup> "O truly fortunate revolution in France, every true Catholic in this country may exclaim, which has brought us so many edifying and enlightened instructors! There is no part of the United States that cannot bear witness to their zeal and that should not be eternally grateful! Where is the youth of a liberal education, sincere piety and correct morals, who has not been formed by some one or more of the clergy of France, emigrants to this country? Where is the College or Catholic establishment that has not been or is not now under their direction? They have taught our youth, they have instructed and enlightened our people, they have directed thousands in the way of heaven . . . to say all in one word . . . for these twenty-five years back, they have contributed—principally contributed—to render the Church in this country what it now is." *Laity's Directory for 1822*, p. 103.

Laws were needed to guide these groups of Catholics, priests and people, along the right way. Strict regulations were necessary if church discipline were to be properly established. The mind of the Bishop and of his clergy on mooted points of opinion had to be made known to the Catholic laity. Restraint in the privileges of the lay trustees was wanted in almost all the large Catholic centres. Dr. Carroll knew his country and his Church better than any Catholic in America at that time; but with his usual prudence, he studied the whole situation carefully before sending out the formal call to his priests to meet him in America's first Synod.



SEAL OF BISHOP CARROLL







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